BROWN AND ARTHUR:

AN

EPISODE

FROM

"Tom Brown's School Days."

Thomas Hughes

"Once to every man and nation, comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit; till his Lord is crucified."

ARRANGED FOR THE PRESS

BY A MOTHER.

RICHMOND:
WEST & JOHNSTON.
1861.

PREFACE

THE best and most useful years of my life have been employed in teaching the young—in an effort totrain my young country women to proper intellectual self-culture, and to lead them in the paths of truth and right; in short, to follow out the teachings and follow up the wishes of anxious, tender, pious parents, who, for the sake of literary advantages, had consented to the temporary removal of their children from the sacred sanctuary of home. My pupils are scattered all over our broad and beautiful State, and that of our sister and neighbor, North Carolina. Some dwell in the far South, some in the far West, and a few are doing their work in northern homes, and fewer still abroad in our mother-land; and it gladdens my heart to know, that as the shadows lengthen in my own descent to the grave, their rising and meridian sun shines upon good christian daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers, who are doing the work of life well and truly, and training others for an inheritance beyond the skies. I never cease to pray for them and tenderly to look after them, and among the rewards of my laborious work is the

recollection of their loving loyalty, and the reversion of affectionate regard which these young people most kindly and cordially exhibit. Though separated by sundering paths we sometimes meet; and when that is not allowed, I comfort myself with the aspiration:

> "Daughters and pupils may we meet
> Where knowledge has its joy complete,
> And love no parting knows."

Though no longer actively engaged in the work of education I cannot lose my interest in the mental and spiritual welfare of the young of our country; and, with the hope of benefitting them and of keeping the links of association bright, I have sought to arrange this little volume. It is compiled from a work referring immediately to the school life of *boys*, but containing so much of general application, that I am sure no parent or child, no teacher or pupil, can read it without having every good motive quickened and every high principle strengthened. I have introduced some of the prayers of Dr. Arnold, prepared for special occasions and under the peculiar circumstances that arise in life at school; and to this preface I have subjoined a short prayer from my own little collection, with the hope that it may assist some youthful teacher in her office of devotion, and perhaps remind some of those who once dwelt with me "as children" of those morning hours, when, for years, we knelt together and made the "offering to the Lord" the first business of every day.

With the hope that the continued blessing of our Heavenly Father may rest upon my pupils, this little volume is dedicated to their children by their Mothers' Teacher.

ANNA MEAD CHALMERS.

Festival of All Saints, 1860.

MORNING PRAYER FOR A FEMALE SCHOOL.

O thou great and glorious God, who makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise thee, we, thy helpless children, would acknowledge thy goodness in permitting us to behold the light of another day. We have laid ourselves down in peace and slept, and have awaked, for thou hast sustained us; and now, O Lord, with grateful hearts, we kneel before thee to ask for thy continued protection and to implore from thee that grace which can alone enable us to spend this day in safety and peace, The darkness and the light are both alike to thee. Thou art about our beds by night and our paths by day, and spiest out all our ways, and there is not a word of our mouths, but thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether. May this solemn thought so affect our motives and actions, that they may be always acceptable in thy sight.

We are collected together for the purpose of receiving instruction, and are now about to commence another term of duty. We feel our own weakness, and pray for the aid of thy Holy Spirit, that we may be guided and blessed in all we undertake. Make us diligent in our studies, respectful and attentive to our teachers, and gentle and affectionate to each other. May we live together as a band of sisters, and be kindly affectioned one toward another Let all anger, evil speaking and impatience be far from the hearts of each one of us, and the same mind dwell in us that was also in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Suffer us not to forget, O Lord, that it is a part of our duty to thee, faithfully to improve our time and present privileges, and while we are pursuing our daily studies, may we be led to seek that knowledge which causeth not to err and will make us wise to salvation. May we set the Lord Jesus Christ always before us as our great Master and Teacher, and so learn of him that we may at length be found among his redeemed children on high.

Most gracious God grant that thy blessing may rest upon this school—make it a nursery of virtue, of knowledge and holiness—may a sense of thy continual presence check every unholy feeling and calm every unruly temper. Oh may each of these beloved children "seek thee early," and according to thy gracious promise find thee *a good and gracious God—a God of love and truth.* Sanctify the instructions they receive, and guide their young hearts to thee, the great fountain of light and knowledge. May their bodies and souls be precious in thy sight. If it seemeth good unto thee, preserve them from sickness; but may they always remember that they are not too young to die, and that one day in thy sight is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Let thy heavenly blessing rest upon the teachers of this school and upon those who preside in this household, May a sense of their responsible trust keep them close to thee, their only safe counsellor. Give them a right judgment in all things—wisdom from on high to guide, and grace from on high to strengthen. While training the minds of these young persons in the way of knowledge and usefulness, may they never forget the priceless value of their immortal souls—for each of which the Lord Jesus Christ died—and may the sanctifying influences of thy Holy Spirit accompany all their teachings.

We now commit ourselves, O Lord, to thee. Make us a happy and loving family; bless our absent parents and friends, and take us all this day and forever under the shadow of thy Fatherly wings.

We ask for these and all other blessings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

INTRODUCTION.

It was recently said by Lord Brougham, that no book published in England for the last fifty years had done more good than "Tom Brown's School Days," and a good and gifted clergyman of our own American Church, has pronounced it a most able auxiliary in the religious education of the young. Its interest and influence cannot be attributed to the narrative—for that is so slight as hardly to form a story—being nothing more than a series of pictures of the various parts of a school boy's life. There must be something under this to give value to the volume; and it is found in the impress it bears of the spirit and teaching of the noble Dr. Arnold.

We find here illustrated in the every day incidents of school life, the principle which this great teacher so thoroughly possessed himself, and with which he so successfully inspired his pupils, that there was a work—an *individual work* for each to do in this world; and that the only real happiness was to be found in doing that work truly and faithfully. To how many did he thus unfold a new life, causing a strange joy to come over the weakest as well as strongest at discovering that he had the means of

being useful. His pupils felt a sympathetic thrill, caught from a master who was himself earnestly at work in the world, and whose work was heartily and cheerfully sustained and constantly carried forward in the fear of God.

With this effort to encourage individual obligation and responsibility was another, which in Dr. Arnold's system was only subordinate to the first, as an evil to be corrected rather than a duty enforced. It was the subjugation of that slavish submission to the opinion and habits of each other, which he considered the crowning evil of public school education. No half year passed without his preaching upon it; he turned it over and over in every possible point of view; he dwelt upon it as the one master fault of all, and solemnly and earnestly did he reiterate and enjoin the words of the prophet,

> "Fear not, nor heed one another's voices,
> But fear and heed the voice of God only."

These two features in the system of Dr. Arnold are most strikingly illustrated in "Tom Brown's School Days," that story of Rugby experience, which an "old boy" has told with so much truth and humor and fond minuteness of detail. The book has passed through numerous editions, and it may seem a needless and bold step to touch or mutilate it. But it is our high value of its teachings that leads us to make this compilation. We believe that a more

touching and inspiring sketch of truth and manly piety in a boy was never written, than that of George Arthur, found near the close of this volume, and we want to bring that sketch into the hands of every boy and girl in our land; to give it a niche in every Sunday-school library, and thus to show how, even in the secular school room, the grace and beauty of early piety can transform and elevate the rude and selfish.

Excellent and amusing as it all is, there is much in "Tom Brown" that is inapplicable to our American school life and system, (I wish, indeed, that it were not so, and that our boys had their cricket matches and boxing clubs), and we have, therefore, with the permission of the publishers, selected an episode, "the turning point of the hero's life," in which the true spirit of the discipline of Dr. Arnold is most fully and happily illustrated. This is the nucleus of our little book, but we have gone *back* to Stanley's Life of Arnold, and *forward* to "Tom Brown at Oxford," gleaning from each such incidents and recollections as fully illustrated the same ruling principle of disinterested effort for the welfare of the young, based upon a constant sense of their responsibility to God in the performance of every duty, the enjoyment of every pleasure. In short, striving to show that it was possible to obey literally the apostolic injunction, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever

ye do, do all in the name of Jesus Christ," so that, not only the church, but the school-room, the study, and the playground, would be made scenes of healthy christian feeling and activity.

We will now give a slight sketch of Tom Brown's *early* days at Rugby, that the portion of the volume extracted may be more fully understood. His experiences are like those of others at an English public school. Though in the main a true, brave boy, he is easily led off by unwise companions; makes war upon school regulations; gets flogged for trespassing; reported for scrambling on the roof of the tower and there scratching his name on the minute hand of the clock; punished for going to Rugby Fair, and otherwise subjected to the penalties "made and provided" for various treasons, felonies, and misdemeanors. Dr. Arnold was a silent observer of his course. He saw that there was talent and truth and right feeling *at the bottom*, though as the old verger said, "Brown was mighty bad *on top*," and the Dr.'s peculiar discipline is now brought upon the stage. Henry East, the *fidus achates* of the hero, is a boy of similar temper and feeling, and. being an older Rugbean has taken him by the hand, and together, they were getting into "all sorts of scrapes." Active, earnest, mercurial boys, who would *never* make the regular school work their first business. So the Doctor resolved to give Brown, in particular, some object

besides games and mischief to expend his surplus energy upon. At the end of the second half-year, when the new boys came, the Dr. without assigning any reason, arranged that Brown and East should be separated, and that George Arthur, a quiet, refined, timid boy, with a delicate body and strong principles, should be assigned to Tom as a chum. His hope was, that having some one to lean upon him, Tom would stand straight himself, and gradually attain moral thoughtfulness and strength. The story, as we now take it up, will show the success of the experiment. The mutual influence of boys of such different characters is strikingly shown, by the wisdom and sagacity of Dr. Arnold. The advantage is reciprocal. Arthur reclaims Tom, who, in his turn wins Arthur by degrees from physical timidity, and initiates him into the athletics of the place.

We insert, in continuation, the closing pages of the book, with some notices from Stanley of the death of Dr. Arnold. Nothing can be more touching, and at the same time more manly, than the grief with which Brown receives the sad news; the rush and conflict of feeling; sorrow for the loss of one so deeply loved and reverenced; regret at the retrospect of his own careless boyhood, which, in the solemn light of that hour,

> "Stamps with remorse each wasted hour of time,
> And darkens each young folly into crime."

the burst of grateful love that the memory of his old master excites, are all told with a simplicity, truth, and manly piety, which must find its way to every feeling heart.

That this "Episode," in which the religious character of the youthful Arthur is so happily delineated, may lead other school boys to "go and do likewise," is the sincere wish of the "Mother" who arranged these pages.

Virginia, Festival of All Saints, 1860.

BROWN AND ARTHUR:

An Episode.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE TIDE TURNED.

"Once to every man and nation, comes the moment to decide
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;
* * * * * *
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified."

LOWELL.

THE turning point in Tom Brown's school career had now come, and the manner of it was as follows. On the evening of the first day of the next half-year, Tom, East, and another school-house boy, who had just been dropped at the Spread Eagle by the old Regulator, rushed into the matron's room in high spirits, such as all real boys are in when they first get back, however fond they may be of home.

"Well, Mrs. Wixie," shouted one, seizing on the methodical, active little dark-eyed woman, who was busy stowing away the linen of the

boys who had already arrived in their several pigeon-holes, "here we are again you see, jolly as ever. Let us help you put the things away."

"And, Mary," cried another, (she was called indifferently by either name,) "who's come back? Has the Doctor made old Jones leave? How many new boys are there?"

"Am I and East to have Gray's study? You know you promised to get it for us if you could," shouted Tom.

"And am I to sleep in No. 4?" roared East.

"How's old Sam, and Bogle, and Sally?"

"Bless the boys," cries Mary, at last getting in a word, "why you'll shake me to death. There, now, do go away up to the housekeeper's room and get your suppers; you know I haven't time to talk—you'll find plenty more in the house. Now, Master East, do let those things alone—you're mixing up three new boys' things." And she rushed at East, who escaped round the open trunks holding up a prize.

"Hullo, look here, Tommy," shouted he, "here's fun!" and he brandished above his head some pretty little night-caps, beautifully made and marked, the work of loving fingers in some distant country home. The kind mo-

ther and sisters, who sewed that delicate stitching with aching hearts, little thought of the trouble they might be bringing on the young head for which they were meant. The little matron was wiser, and snatched the caps from East before he could look at the name on them.

"Now, Master East, I shall be very angry if you don't go," said she; "there's some capital cold beef and pickles up stairs, and I won't have you old boys in my room first night."

"Hurrah for the pickles! Come along, Tommy, come along, Smith. We shall find out who the young count is, I'll be bound; I hope he'll sleep in my room. Mary's always vicious first week"

As the boys turned to leave the room, the matron touched Tom's arm, and said, "Master Brown, please stop a minute. I want to speak to you."

"Very well, Mary. I'll come in a minute, East; don't finish the pickles—"

"Oh, Master Brown," went on the little matron when the rest had gone, "you're to have Gray's study, Mrs. Arnold says. And she wants you to take in this young gentleman. He's a new boy and thirteen years old, though he don't look

it. He's very delicate, and has never been from home before. And I told Mrs. Arnold I thought you'd be kind to him, and see that they don't bully him at first. He's put into your form, and I've given him the bed next to yours in Number 4; so East can't sleep there this half."

Tom was rather put about by this speech. He had got the double study which he coveted, but here were conditions attached which greatly moderated his joy. He looked across the room, and in the far corner of the sofa, was aware of a slight, pale boy, with large blue eyes and light fair hair, who seemed ready to shrink through the floor. He saw at a glance that the little stranger was just the boy whose first half-year at a public school would be misery to himself if he were let alone, or constant anxiety to any one who meant to see him through his troubles, Tom was too honest to take in the youngster and then let him shift for himself; and if he took him as his chum instead of East, where were all his pet plans of having a bottled-beer cellar under his window, and making night-lines and slings, and plotting expeditions to Brownsover Mills and Caldecott's Spinney? East and he had made up their minds to get this study,

and then every night from locking-up till ten they would be together, to talk about fishing, drink bottled-beer, read Marryatt's novels, and sort birds' eggs. And this new boy would most likely never go out of the close, and would be afraid of wet feet, and always getting laughed at, and called Molly, or Jenny, or some derogatory feminine nickname.

The matron watched him for a moment, and saw what was passing in his mind, and so, like a wise negotiator, threw in an appeal to his warm heart. "Poor little fellow," said she in almost a whisper, "his father's dead, and he's got no brothers. And his mamma, such a kind sweet lady, almost broke her heart at leaving him this morning; and she said one of his sisters was like to die of decline, and so—"

"Well, well," burst in Tom, with something like a sigh at the effort, "I suppose I must give up East. Come along, young 'un. What's your name? We'll go and have some supper, and then I'll show you our study."

"His name's George Arthur," said the matron, walking up to him with Tom, who grasped his little delicate hand as the proper preliminary to making a chum of him, and felt as if he could

have blown him away. "I've had his books and things put into the study, which his mamma has had new papered, and the sofa covered, and new green-baize curtains over the door," (the diplomatic matron threw this in, to show that the new boy was contributing largely to the partnership comforts.) "And Mrs. Arnold told me to say," she added, "that she should like you both to come up to tea with her. You know the way, Master Brown, and the things are just gone up, I know."

Here was an announcement for Master Tom! He was to go up to tea the first night, just as if he were a sixth or fifth-form boy, and of importance in the school world, instead of the most reckless scapegrace among the fags. He felt himself lifted on to a higher moral and social platform at once. Nevertheless he couldn't give up, without a sigh, the idea of the jolly supper in the housekeeper's room with East and the rest, and a rush round to all the studies of his friends afterwards, to pour out the deeds and wonders of the holidays, to plot fifty plans for the coming half-year, and to gather news of who had left, and what new boys had come, who had got who's study, and where the new præpostors

slept. However, Tom consoled himself with thinking that he couldn't have done all this with the new boy at his heels, and so marched off along the passages to the Doctor's private house, with his young charge in tow, in monstrous good humour with himself and all the world.

It is needless, and would be impertinent to tell, how the two young boys were received in that drawing-room. The lady who presided there is still living, and has carried with her to her peaceful home in the North the respect and love of all those who ever felt and shared that gentle and high-bred hospitality. Aye, many is the brave heart now doing its work and bearing its load in country curacies, London chambers, under the Indian sun, and in Australian towns and clearings, which looks back with fond and grateful memory to that school-house drawing-room, and dates much of its highest and best training to the lessons learnt there.

Besides Mrs. Arnold and one or two of the elder children, there were one of the younger masters, young Brooke, who was now in the sixth and had succeeded to his brother's position and influence, and another sixth-form boy there,

talking together before the fire. The master and young Brooke, now a great strapping fellow six feet high, eighteen years old, and powerful as a coal-heaver, nodded kindly to Tom to his intense glory, and then went on talking; the other did not notice them. The hostess, after a few kind words, which led the boys at once and insensibly to feel at their ease, to begin talking to one another, left them with her own children while she finished a letter. The young ones got on fast and well, Tom holding forth about a prodigious pony he had been riding out hunting, and hearing stories of the winter glories of the lakes, when tea came in, and immediately after the Doctor himself.

How frank, and kind, and manly, was his greeting to the party by the fire; it did Tom's heart good to see him and young Brooke shake hands, and look one another in the face; and he didn't fail to remark that Brooke was nearly as tall and quite as broad as the Doctor. And his cup was full, when in another moment his master turned to him with another warm shake of the hand, and seemingly oblivious of all the late scrapes which he had been getting into, said, "Ah, Brown, you here! I hope you left your father and all quite well at home."

, Yes, sir, quite well."

"And this is the little fellow who is to share your study. Well, he doesn't look as we should like to see him. He wants some Rugby air, and cricket. And you must take him some good long walks, to Bilton Grange, and Caldecott's Spinney, and show him what a pretty little country we have about here."

Tom wondered if the Doctor knew that his visits to Bilton Grange were for the purpose of taking rook's nests (a proceeding strongly discountenanced by the owner thereof), and those to Caldecott's Spinney, were prompted chiefly by the conveniences for setting night-lines. What didn't the Doctor know? And what a noble use he always made of it. He almost resolved to abjure rook-pies and night-lines forever. The tea went merrily off, the Doctor now talking of holiday doings, and then of the prospects of the half-year, what chance there was for the Balliol scholarship, whether the eleven would be a good one. Everybody was at their ease, and everybody felt that he, young as he might be, was of some use in the little school world, and had a work to do there.

Soon after tea the Doctor went off to his study,

and the young boys a few minutes afterwards took their leave, and went out of the private door which led from the Doctor's house into the middle passage.

At the fire, at the further end of the passage, was a crowd of boys in loud talk and laughter. There was a sudden pause when the door opened, and then a great shout of greeting, as Tom was recognized marching down the passage.

"Hullo, Brown, where do you come from?"

"Oh, I've been to tea with the Doctor," says Tom, with great dignity.

"My eye," cried East. "Oh! so that's why Mary called you back, and you didn't come to supper. You lost something—that beef and pickles was no end good."

"I say, young fellow," cried Hall, detecting Arthur and catching him by the collar, "what's your name? Where do you come from? How old are you?"

Tom saw Arthur shrink back and look scared, as all the group turned to him, but thought it best to let him answer, just standing by his side to support in case of need.

"Arthur, sir. I come from Devonshire."

"Don't call me 'sir,' you young muff. How old are you?"

"Thirteen."

"Can you sing?"

The poor boy was trembling and hesitating. Tom struck in—"You be hanged, Tadpole. He'll have to sing, whether he can or not, Saturday twelve weeks, and that's long enough off yet."

"Do you know him at home, Brown?"

"No, but he's my chum in Gray's old study, and it's near prayer time, and I haven't had a look at it yet. Come along, Arthur."

Away went the two, Tom longing to get his charge safe under cover, where he might advise him on his deportment.

"What a queer chum for Tom Brown," was the comment at the fire; and it must be confessed so thought Tom himself, as he lighted his candle, and surveyed the new green-baize curtains, and the carpet and sofa with much satisfaction.

"I say, Arthur, what a brick your mother is to make us so cosy. But look here now, you must answer straight up when the fellows speak to you, and don't be afraid. If you're afraid,

you'll get bullied. And don't you say you can sing; and don't you ever talk about home, and your mother and sisters."

Poor little Arthur looked ready to cry.

"But please," said he, "mayn't I talk about —about home to you?"

"Oh, yes, I like it. But don't talk to boys you don't know, or they'll call you home-sick, or mamma's darling, or some such stuff. What a jolly desk! is that your's? And what stunning binding! why, your school-books look like novels."

And Tom was soon deep in Arthur's goods and chattels, all new and good enough for a fifth-form boy, and hardly thought of his friends outside, till the prayer-bell rung.

I have already described the school-house prayers; they were the same on the first night as on the other nights, save for the gaps caused by the absence of those boys who came late, and the line of new boys who stood all together at the further table—of all sorts and sizes, like young bears, with all their troubles to come, as Tom's father had said to him when he was in the same position. He thought of it as he looked at the line, and poor little slight Arthur standing

with them, and as he was leading him up stairs to Number 4, directly after prayers, and showing him his bed. It was a huge, high, airy room, with two large windows looking on to the school close. There were twelve beds in the room, The one in the furthest corner by the fireplace, occupied by the sixth-form boy who was responsible for the discipline of the room, and the rest by boys in the lower-fifth and other junior forms, all fags, (for the fifth-form boys, as has been said, slept in rooms by themselves.) Being fags, the eldest of them was not more than about sixteen years old, and were all bound to be up and in bed by ten; the sixth-form boys came to bed from ten to a quarter past, (at which time the old verger came round to put the candles out,) except when they sat up to read.

Within a few minutes, therefore, of their entry, all the other boys who slept in Number 4 had come up. The little fellows went quietly to their own beds, and began undressing and talking to one another in whispers; while the elder, amongst whom was Tom, sat chatting about on one another's beds, with their jacket and waistcoats off. Poor little Arthur was overwhelmed with the novelty of his position. The

idea of sleeping in the room with strange boys, had clearly never crossed his mind before, and was as painful as it was strange to him. He could hardly bear to take his jacket off; however, presently with an effort off it came, and then he paused and looked at Tom, who was sitting at the bottom of his bed, talking and laughing.

"Please, Brown," he whispered, "may I wash my face and hands?"

"Of course, if you like," said Tom staring; "that's your washhand-stand under the window, second from your bed. You'll have to go down for more water in the morning if you use it all." And on he went with his talk, while Arthur stole timidly from between the beds out to his washhand-stand, and began his ablutions, thereby drawing for a moment on himself the attention of the room.

On went the talk and laughter. Arthur finished his washing and undressing, and put on his night-gown. He then looked round more nervously than ever. Two or three of the little boys were already in bed, sitting up with their chins on ther knees. The light burned clear, the noise went on, It was a trying moment for

the poor little lonely boy; however this time he didn't ask Tom what he might or might not do, but dropped on his knees by his bedside, as he had done every day from his childhood, to open his heart to Him, who heareth the cry and beareth the sorrows of the tender child, and the strong man in agony.

Tom was sitting at the bottom of his bed unlacing his boots, so that his back was towards Arthur, and he didn't see what had happened, and looked up in wonder at the sudden silence. Then two or three boys laughed and sneered, and a big brutal fellow, who was standing in the middle of the room, picked up a slipper, and shied it at the kneeling boy, calling him a snivelling young shaver. Then Tom saw the whole, and the next moment the boot he had just pulled of flew straight at the head of the bully, who had just time to throw up his arm and catch it on his elbow.

"Confound you, Brown, what's that for?" roared he, stamping with pain.

"Never mind what I mean," said Tom, stepping on to the floor, every drop of blood in his body tingling; "if any fellow wants the other boot, he knows how to get it."

What would have been the result is doubtful, for at this moment the sixth-form boy came in, and not another word could be said. Tom and the rest rushed into bed and finished their unrobing there, and the old verger, as punctual as the clock, had put out the candle in another minute, and toddled on to the next room, shutting their door with his usual "Good night, genl'm'n."

There were many boys in the room by whom that little scene was taken to heart before they slept. But sleep seemed to have deserted the pillow of poor Tom. For some time his excitement, and the flood of memories which chased one another through his brain, kept him from thinking or resolving. His head throbbed, his heart leapt, and he could hardly keep himself from springing out of bed and rushing about the room. Then the thought of his own mother came across him, and the promise he had made at her knee, years ago, never to forget to kneel by his bedside, and give himself up to his Father, before he laid his head on his pillow, from which it might never rise; and he lay down gently and cried as if his heart would break. He was only fourteen years old.

It was no light act of courage in those days,

my dear boys, for a little fellow to say his prayers publicly, even at Rugby. A few years later, when Arnold's manly piety had begun to leaven the school, the tables turned; before he died, in the school-house at least, and I believe in the other houses, the rule was the other way. But poor Tom had come to school in other times. The first few nights after he came he did not kneel down because of the noise, but sat up in bed till the candle was out, and then stole out and said his prayers, in fear lest some one should find him out. So did many another poor little fellow. Then he began to think that he might just as well say his prayers in bed, and then that it didn't matter whether he was kneeling, or sitting, or lying down. And so it had come to pass with Tom, as with all who will not confess their Lord before men; and for the last year he had probably not said his prayers in earnest a dozen times.

Poor Tom! the first and bitterest feeling which was like to break his heart, was the sense of his own cowardice. The vice of all others which he loathed was brought in and burned in on his own soul. He had lied to his mother, to his conscience, to his God. How could he bear it?

And then the poor little weak boy, whom he had pitied and almost scorned for his weakness, had done that, which he, braggart as he was, dared not do. The first dawn of comfort came to him in swearing to himself that he would stand by that boy through thick and thin, and cheer him, and help him, and bear his burthens, for the good deed done that night. Then he resolved to write home next day and tell his mother all, and what a coward her son had been. And then peace came to him as he resolved, lastly, to bear his testimony next morning. The morning would be harder than the night to begin with, but he felt that he could not afford to let one chance slip. Several times he faltered, for the devil showed him first, all his old friends calling him "Saint," and "Square-toes," and a dozen hard names, and whispered to him that his motives would be misunderstood, and he would only be left alone with the new boy; whereas it was his duty to keep all means of influence, that he might do good to the largest number. And then came the more subtle temptation, "Shall I not be showing myself braver than others by doing this? Have I any right to begin it now? Ought I not rather to pray in my own study, letting

other boys know that I do so, and trying to lead them to it, while in public at least I should go on as I have done?" However, his good angel was too strong that night, and he turned on his side and slept, tired of trying to reason, but resolved to follow the impulse which had been so strong, and in which he had found peace.

Next morning he was up and washed and dressed, all but his jacket and waistcoat, just as the ten minutes' bell began to ring, and then in the face of the whole room knelt down to pray. Not five words could he say—the bell mocked him; he was listening for every whisper in the room—what were they all thinking of him? He was ashamed to go on kneeling, ashamed to rise from his knees. At last, as it were from his inmost heart, a still small voice seemed to breathe forth the words of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" He repeated them over and over, clinging to them as for his life, and rose from his knees comforted and humbled, and ready to face the whole world. It was not needed; two other boys besides Arthur had already followed his example, and he went down to the great school with a glimmering of another lesson in his heart—the lesson that he who has conquered his own cow-

ard spirit has conquered the whole outward world; and that other one, which the old prophet learnt in the cave at Mount Horeb, when he hid his face, and the still small voice asked, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" that however we may fancy ourselves alone on the side of good, the King and Lord of men is nowhere without His witnesses; for in every society, however seemingly corrupt and godless, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

He found, too, how greatly he had exaggerated the effect to be produced by his act. For a few nights there was a sneer or a laugh when he knelt down, but this passed off soon, and one by one all the other boys but three or four followed the lead. I fear that this was in some measure owing to the fact, that Tom could probably have thrashed any boy in the room except the præpostor; at any rate, everybody knew that he would try upon very slight provocation, and didn't choose to run the risk of a hard fight because Tom Brown had taken a fancy to say his prayers. Some of the small boys of Number 4 communicated the new state of things to their chums, and in several other rooms the poor little fellows tried it on; in one instance or so, where

the præposter heard of it and interfered very decidedly, with partial success; but in the rest, after a short struggle, the confessors were bullied or laughed down, and the old state of things went on for some time longer. Before either Tom Brown or Arthur left the school-house, there was no room in which it had not become the regular custom. I trust it is so still, and that the old heathen state of things has gone out for ever.

CHAPTER II.

THE NEW BOY.

"And Heaven's rich instincts in him grew
As effortless as woodland nooks
Send violets up and paint them blue."—LOWELL.

I DO not mean to recount all the little troubles and annoyances which thronged upon Tom at the beginning of this half-year, in his new character of bear-leader to a gentle little boy straight from home. He seemed to himself to have become a new boy again, without any of the long-suffering and meekness indispensable for supporting that character with moderate success. From morning till night he had the feeling of responsibility on his mind, and even if he left Arthur in their study or in the close for an hour, was never at ease till he had him in sight again. He waited for him at the doors of the school after every lesson and every calling-over; watched that no tricks were played him, and none but the regulation questions asked; kept his eye on his plate at dinner and breakfast, to see that no unfair depredations were made

upon his viands; in short, as East remarked, cackled after him like a hen with one chick.

Arthur took a long time thawing too, which made it all the harder work; was sadly timid; scarcely ever spoke unless Tom spoke to him first; and, worst of all, would agree with him in everything, the hardest thing in the world for Brown to bear. He got quite angry sometimes, as they sat together of a night in their study, at this provoking habit of agreement, and was on the point of breaking out a dozen times with a lecture upon the propriety of a fellow having a will of his own and speaking out; but managed to restrain himself by the thought that it might only frighten Arthur, and the remembrance of the lesson he had learnt from him on his first night at Number 4. Then he would resolve to sit still, and not say a word till Arthur began; but he was always beat at that game, and had presently to begin talking in despair, fearing lest Arthur might think he was vexed at something if he didn't, and dog-tired of sitting tongue-tied.

It was hard work! But Tom had taken it up; and meant to stick to it, and go through with it, so as to satisfy himself; in which resolution he was much assisted by the chaffing of East and

his other old friends, who began to call him "dry-nurse," and otherwise to break their small wit on him. But when they took other ground, as they did every now and then, Tom was sorely puzzled.

"Tell you what, Tommy," East would say, you'll spoil young hopeful with too much coddling. Why can't you let him go about by himself, and find his own level? He'll never be worth a button, if you go on keeping him under your skirts."

"Well, but he ain't fit to fight his own way yet; I'm trying to get him to it every day—but he's very odd. Poor little beggar! I can't make him out a bit. He ain't a bit like anything I've ever seen or heard of—he seems all over nerves; anything you say, seems to hurt him like a cut or a blow."

"That sort of boy's no use here," said East, "he'll ony spoil. Now I'll tell you what you do, Tommy. Go and get a nice large band-box made, and put him in with plenty of cotton-wool, and a pap-bottle, labelled 'With care—this side up,' and send him back to mamma."

"I think I shall make a hand of him though," said Tom, smiling, "say what you will. There's

something about him, every now and then, which shows me he's got pluck somewhere in him. That's the only thing after all, that'll wash, ain't it, old Scud? But how to get at it and bring it out?"

Tom took one hand out of his breeches-pocket and stuck it in his back hair for a scratch, giving his hat a tilt over his nose, his one method of invoking wisdom. He stared at the ground with a ludicrously puzzled look, and presently looked up and met East's eyes. That young gentlemen slapped him on the back, and then put his arm round his shoulder, as they strolled through the quadrangle together. "Tom," said he, "blest if you ain't the best old fellow ever was—I do like to see you go into a thing. Hang it, I wish I could take things as you do—but I never can get higher than a joke. Everything's a joke. If I was going to be flogged next minute, I should be in a blue funk, but I couldn't help laughing at it for the life of me."

After this East came a good deal to their study, and took notice of Arthur; and soon allowed to Tom, that he was a thorough little gentleman, and would get over his shyness all in good time; which much comforted our hero. He felt every

day, too, the value of having an object in his life, something that drew him out of himself; and, it being the dull time of the year, and no games going about for which he much cared, was happier than he had ever yet been at school, which was saying a great deal.

The time which Tom allowed himself away from his charge, was from locking-up till supper-time. During this hour, or hour-and-a-half, he used to take his fling, going round to the studies of all his acquaintance, sparring or gossiping in the hall, now jumping the old iron-bound tables, or carving a bit of his name on them, then joining in some chorus of merry voices; in fact, blowing off his steam, as we should now call it.

This process was so congenial to his temper, and Arthur showed himself so pleased at the arrangement, that it was several weeks before Tom was ever in their study before supper. One evening, however, he rushed in to look for an old chisel, or some corks, or other article essential to his pursuit for the time being, and while rummaging about in the cupboards, looked up for a moment, and was caught at once by the figure of poor little Arthur. The boy was sitting with his elbows on the table, and his head leaning on

his hands, and before him an open book, on which his tears were falling fast. Tom shut the door at once, and sat down on the sofa by Arthur, putting his arm round his neck.

"Why, young'un! what's the matter?" said he kindly; "you ain't unhappy, are you?"

"Oh no, Brown," said the little boy, looking up with the great tears in his eyes, "you are so kind to me, I'm very happy."

"Why don't you call me Tom? lots of boys do, that I don't like half so much as you. What are you reading then? Hang it, you must come about with me, and not mope yourself," and Tom cast down his eyes on the book and saw it was the Bible. He was silent for a minute, and thought to himself, "Lesson Number 2, Tom Brown,"—and then said gently—

"I'm very glad to see this, Arthur, and ashamed that I don't read the Bible more, myself. Do you read it every night before supper while I'm out?"

"Yes."

"Well, I wish you'd wait till afterwards, and then we'd read together. But, Arthur, why does it make you cry?"

"Oh, it isn't that I'm unhappy. But at home,

while my father was alive, we always read the lessons after tea; and I love to read them over now, and try to remember what he said about them. I can't remember all, and I think I scarcely understand a great deal of what I do remember. But it all comes back to me, so fresh, that I can't help crying sometimes to think I shall never read them again with him."

Arthur had never spoken of his home before, and Tom hadn't encouraged him to do so, as his blundering school-boy reasoning made him think that Arthur would be softened and less manly for thinking of home. But now he was fairly interested, and forgot all about chisels and bottled beer; while with very little encouragement Arthur launched into his home history, and the prayer-bell put them both out sadly when it rang to call them to the hall.

From this time Arthur constantly spoke of his home, and above all, of his father, who had been dead about a year, and whose memory Tom soon got to love and reverence almost as much as his own son did.

Arthur's father had been the clergyman of a parish in the Midland counties, which had risen into a large town during the war, and upon

which the hard years which followed had fallen with a fearful weight. The trade had been half ruined; and then came the old sad story, of masters reducing their establishments, men turned off and wandering about, hungry and wan in body, and fierce in soul, from the thought of wives and children starving at home, and the last sticks of furniture going to the pawn-shop. Children taken from school, and lounging about the dirty streets and courts, too listless almost to play, and squalid in rags and misery. And then the fearful struggle between the employers and men; lowerings of wages, strikes, and the long course of oft-repeated crime, ending every now and then with a riot, a fire, and the county yeomanry. There is no need here to dwell upon such tales; the Englishman into whose soul they have not sunk deep, is not worthy the name: you English boys for whom this book is meant (God bless your bright faces and kind hearts!) will learn it all soon enough.

Into such a parish and state of society, Arthur's father had been thrown at the age of twenty-five, a young married parson, full of faith, hope, and love. He had battled with it like a man, and had lots of fine Utopian ideas about the perfect-

ability of mankind, glorious humanity, and such like knocked out of his head; and a real, wholesome Christian love for the poor, struggling, sinning men, of whom he felt himself one, and with and for whom he spent fortune, and strength and life, driven into his heart. He had battled like a man, and gotten a man's reward. No silver teapots or salvers, with flowery inscriptions, setting forth his virtues and the appreciation of a genteel parish; no fat living or stall, for which he never looked, and didn't care; no sighs and praises of comfortable dowagers and well got-up young women, who worked him slippers, sugared his tea,and adored him as "a devoted man;" but a manly respect, wrung from the unwilling souls of men who fancied his order their natural enemies; the fear and hatred of every one who was false or unjust in the district, were he master or man; and the blessed sight of women and children daily becoming more human and more homely, a comfort to themselves and to their husbands and fathers.

These things of course took time, and had to be fought for with toil and sweat of brain and heart, and with the life blood poured out. All that, Arthur had laid his account to give, a

took as a matter of course; neither pitying himself, or looking on himself as a martyr, when he felt the wear and tear making him feel old before his time, and the stifling air of fever dens telling on his health. His wife seconded him in everything. She had been rather fond of society, and much admired and run after before her marriage; and the London world to which she had belonged, pitied poor Fanny Evelyn when she married the young clergyman, and went to settle in that smoky hole Turley, a very nest of chartism and atheism, in a part of the county which all the decent families had had to leave for years. 'However, somehow or other she didn't seem to care. If her husband's living had been amongst green fields and near pleasant neighbours, she would have liked it better, that she never pretended to deny. But there they were: the air wasn't bad after all; the people were very good sort of people, civil to you if you were civil to them, after the first brush; and they didn't expect to work miracles, and convert them all off-hand into model Christians.' So he and she went quietly among the folk, talking to and treating them just as they would have done people of their own rank. They didn't feel that they were doing

anything out of the common way, and so were perfectly natural, and had none of that condescension or consciousness of manner, which so outrages the independent poor. And thus they gradually won respect and confidence; and after sixteen years he was looked up to by the whole neighbourhood as *the* just man, *the* man to whom masters and men could go in their strikes, and all in their quarrels and difficulties, and by whom the right and true word would be said without fear or favour. And the women had come round to take her advice, and go to her as a friend in all their troubles; while the children all worshipped the very ground she trod on.

They had three children, two daughters and a son, little George, who came between his sisters. He had been a very delicate boy from his childhood; they thought he had a tendency to consumption, and so he had been kept at home and taught by his father, who had made a companion of him, and from whom he had gained good scholarship, and a knowledge of and interest in many subjects which boys in general never come across till they are many years older.

Just as he reached his thirteenth year, and his father had settled that he was strong enough

to go to school, and, after much debating with himself, had resolved to send him there, a desperate typhus-fever broke out in the town; most of the other clergy, and almost all the doctors, ran away; the work fell with tenfold weight on those who stood to their work. Arthur and his wife both caught the fever, of which he died in a few days, and she recovered, having been able to nurse him to the end, and store up his last words. He was sensible to the last, and calm and happy, leaving his wife and children with fearless trust for a few years in the hands of the Lord and Friend who had lived and died for him, and for whom he, to the best of his power, had lived and died. His widow's mourning was deep and gentle; she was more affected by the request of the Committee of a Freethinking club, established in the town by some of the factory hands (which he had striven against with might and main, and nearly suppressed), that some of their number might be allowed to help bear the coffin, than any thing else. Two of them were chosen, who, with six other labouring men, his own fellow-workmen and friends, bore him to the grave—a man who had fought the Lord's fight, even unto the death. The shops

were closed, and the factories shut that day in the parish, yet no master stopped the day's wages; but for many a year afterwards the townsfolk felt the want of that brave, hopeful, loving parson, and his wife, who had lived to teach them mutual forbearance and helpfulness, and had *almost* at last given them a glimpse of what this old world would be, if people would live for God and each other, instead of for themselves.

What has all this to do with our story? Well, my dear boys, let a fellow go on his own way, or you won't get any thing out of him worth having. I must show you what sort of a man it was who had begotten and trained little Arthur, or else you won't believe in him, which I am resolved you shall do, and you won't see how he, the timid, weak boy, had points in him from which the bravest and strongest recoiled, and made his presence and example felt from the first, on all sides, unconsciously to himself, and without the least attempt at proselytizing. The spirit of his father was in him, and the Friend to whom his father had left him did not neglect the trust.

After supper that night, and almost nightly

for years afterwards, Tom and Arthur, and by degrees East occasionally, and sometimes one, sometimes another, of their friends, read a chapter of the Bible together, and talked it over afterwards. Tom was at first utterly astonished, and almost shocked, at the sort of way in which Arthur read the book, and talked about the men and women whose lives were there told. The first night they happened to fall on the chapters about the famine in Egypt, and Arthur began talking about Joseph as if he were a living statesman; just as he might have talked about Lord Grey and the Reform Bill; only that they were much more living realities to him. The book was to him, Tom saw, the most vivid and delightful history of real people, who might do right or wrong, just like any one who was walking about in Rugby—the Doctor, or the master, or the sixth-form boys. But the astonishment soon passed off, the scales seemed to drop from his eyes, and the book became at once and forever, to him the great human and divine book, and the men and women, whom he had looked upon as something quite different from himself, became his friends and counsellors.

For our purposes, however, the history of one

night's reading will be sufficient, which must be told here, now we are on the subject, though it didn't happen till a year afterwards, and long after the events recorded in the next chapter of our story.

Arthur, Tom and East were together one night, and read the story of Naaman coming to Elisha to be cured of his leprosy. When the chapter was finished, Tom shut the Bible with a slap.

"I can't stand that fellow Naaman," said he, "after what he'd seen and felt, going back and bowing himself down in the house of Rimmon, because his effeminate scoundrel of a master did it. I wonder Elisha took the trouble to heal him. How he must have despised him."

"Yes there you go off as usual, with a shell on your head," stuck in East, who always took the opposite side to Tom; half from love of argument, half from conviction. "How do you know he didn't think better of it? how do you know his master was a scoundrel? His letter don't look like it, and the book don't say so."

"I don't care," rejoined Tom; "why did Naaman talk about bowing down, then, if he didn't mean to do it? He wasn't likely to ge

more in earnest when he got back to court, and away from the prophet."

"Well but, Tom," said Arthur, "see what Elisha says to him, 'Go in peace.' He wouldn't have said that if Naaman had been in the wrong."

"I don't see that that means more than saying, 'You're not the man I took you for.'"

"No, no, that won't do at all," said East; "read the words fairly, and take men as you find them. I like Naaman, and think he was a very fine fellow."

"I don't," said Tom positively.

"Well, I think East is right," said Arthur; "I can't see but what it's right to do the best you can, though it mayn't be the best absolutely. Every man isn't born to be a martyr."

"Of course, of course," said East; "but he's on one of his pet hobbies. How often have I told you, Tom, that you must drive a nail where it'll go."

"And how often have I told you," rejoined Tom, "that it'll always go where you want, if you only stick to it and hit hard enough. I hate half-measures and compromises."

"Yes, he's a whole-hog man, is Tom. Must have the whole animal, hair and teeth, claws and

tail," laughed East. "Sooner have no bread any day, than half the loaf."

"I don't know," said Arthur, "it's rather puzzling; but ain't most right things got by proper compromises, I mean where the principle isn't given up?"

"That's just the point," said Tom; "I don't object to a compromise, where you don't give up your principle."

"Not you," said East laughingly. "I know him of old, Arthur, and you'll find him out some day. There isn't such a reasonable fellow in the world, to hear him talk. He never wants anything but what's right and fair; only when you come to settle what's right and fair, it's every thing that he wants, and nothing that you want. And that's his idea of a compromise. Give me the Brown compromise when I'm on *his* side."

"Now, Harry," said Tom, "no more chaff—I'm serious. Look here—this is what makes my blood tingle;" and he turned over the pages of his Bible and read, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it *be* so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning

fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But *if not*, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will *not* serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up. He read the last verse twice, emphasizing the *nots*, and dwelling on them as if they gave him actual pleasure, and were hard to part with.

They were silent a minute, and then Arthur said, "Yes that's a glorious story, but it don't prove your point, Tom, I think. There are times when there is only one way, and that the highest, and then the men are found to stand in the breach."

"There's always a highest way, and it's always the right one," said Tom. "How many times has the Doctor told us that in his sermons in the last year, I should like to know?"

"Well, you ain't going to convince us, is he Arthur? No Brown compromise to-night," said East, looking at his watch. "But it's past eight and we must go to first lesson. What a bore."

So they took down their books and fell to work; but Arthur didn't forget, and thought long and often over the conversation.

CHAPTER III.

ARTHUR MAKES A FRIEND.

"Let nature be your teacher,
Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things,
We murder to dissect—
Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves,
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives."—WORDSWORTH.

ABOUT six weeks after the beginning of the half, as Tom and Arthur were sitting one night before supper beginning their verses, Arthur suddenly stopped, and looked up, and said, "Tom, do you know anything of Martin?"

"Yes," said Tom, taking his hand out of his back hair, and delighted to throw his Gradus ad Parnassum on to the sofa: "I know him pretty well. He's a very good fellow, but as mad as a hatter. He's called Madman, you know. And never was such a fellow for getting all sorts of rum things about him. He tamed two snakes last half, and used to carry them about in his pocket, and I'll be bound he's got some hedge-

hogs and rats in his cupboard now, and no one knows what besides."

"I should like very much to know him," said Arthur; "he was next to me in the form to-day, and he'd lost his book and looked over mine, and he seemed so kind and gentle, that I liked him very much."

"Ah, poor old madman, he's always losing his books," said Tom, "and getting called up and floored because he hasn't got them."

"I like him all the better," said Arthur.

"Well, he's great fun, I can tell you," said Tom, throwing himself back on the sofa and chuckling at the remembrance. "We had such a game with him one day last half. He had been kicking up horrid scents for some time in his study, till I suppose some fellow told Mary, and she told the Doctor. Any how, one day a little before dinner, when he came down from the library, the Doctor, instead of going home, came striding into the hall. East and I and five or six other fellows were at the fire, and preciously we stared, for he don't come in like that once a year, unless it's a wet day and there's a fight in the hall. "East," says he, "just come and show me Martin's study." "Oh, here's a

game," whispered the rest of us, and we all cut up stairs after the Doctor, East leading. As we got into the New Row, which was hardly wide enough to hold the Doctor and his gown, click, click, click, we heard in the old madman's den. Then that stopped all of a sudden, and the bolts went to like fun: the madman knew East's step, and thought there was going to be a siege.

"It's the Doctor, Martin. He's here and wants to see you," sings out East.

'Then the bolts went back slowly, and the door opened, and there was the old madman standing, looking precious scared; his jacket off, his shirt-sleeves up to his elbows, and his long skinny arms all covered with anchors and arrows and letters, tattooed in with gunpowder like a sailor-boy's, and a smell fit to knock you down coming out. 'Twas all the Doctor could do to stand his ground, and East and I, who were looking in under his arms, held our noses tight. The old magpie was standing on the window-sill, all his feathers drooping, and looking disgusted and half-poisoned.

"'What can you be about, Martin?' says the Doctor; 'you really mustn't go on in this way—you're a nuisance to the whole passage.'

"'Please, sir, I was only mixing up this powder, there isn't any harm in it; and the madman seized nervously on his pestle and mortar, to show the Doctor the harmlessness of his pursuits, and went off pounding: click, click, click; he hadn't given six clicks before, puff! up went the whole into a great blaze, away went the pestle and mortar across the study, and back we tumbled into the passage. The magpie fluttered down into the court, screaming, and the madman danced out, howling, with his fingers in his mouth. The Doctor caught hold of him, and called to us to fetch some water. 'There, you silly fellow,' said he, quite pleased though to find he wasn't much hurt, 'you see you don't know the least what you are doing with all these things; and now, mind, you must give up practising chemistry by yourself.' Then he took hold of his arm and looked at it, and I saw he had to bite his lip, and his eyes twinkled; but he said, quite grave, 'Here, you see, you've been making all these foolish marks on yourself, which you can never get out, and you'll be very sorry for it in a year or two: now come down to the housekeeper's room, and let us see if you are hurt.' And away went the two, and we all staid

and had a regular turn-out of the den, till Martin came back with his hand bandaged and turned us out. However, I'll go and see what he's after, and tell him to come in after prayers to supper." And away went Tom to find the boy in question, who dwelt in a little study by himself, in New Row.

The aforesaid Martin, whom Arthur had taken such a fancy for, was one of those unfortunates, who were at that time of day (and are, I fear. still) quite out of their places at a public-school, If we knew how to use our boys, Martin would have been seized upon and educated as a natural philosopher. He had a passion for birds, beasts, and insects, and knew more of them and their habits than any one in Rugby; except, perhaps, the Doctor, who knew everything. He was also an experimental chemist on a small scale, and had made unto himself an electric machine, from which it was his greatest pleasure and glory to administer small shocks to any small boys who were rash enough to venture into his study. And this was by no means an adventure free from excitement; for, besides the probability of a snake dropping on to your head or twining lovingly up your leg, or a rat getting

into your breeches-pocket in search of food, there was the animal and chemical odour to be faced, which always hung about the den, and the chance of being blown up in some of the many experiments which Martin was always trying, with the most wondrous results in the shape of explosions and smells that mortal boy ever heard of. Of course, poor Martin, in consequence of his pursuits, had become an Ishmaelite in the house. In the first-place he half-poisoned all his neighbours, and they in turn were always on the look-out to pounce upon any of his numerous live stock, and drive him frantic, by enticing his pet old magpie out of his window into a neighbouring study, and making the disreputable old bird drunk on toast soaked in beer and sugar. Then Martin, for his sins, inhabited a study looking into a small court some ten feet across, the window of which was completely commanded by those of the studies opposite in the sick-room row, these latter being at a slightly higher elevation. East, and another boy of an equally tormenting and ingenious turn of mind, now lived exactly opposite, and had expended huge pains and time in the preparation of instruments of annoyance for the

behoof of Martin and his live colony. One morning an old basket made its appearance, suspended by a short cord outside Martin's window, in which were deposited an amateur nest containing four young hungry jackdaws, the pride and glory of Martin's life for the time being, and which he was currently asserted to have hatched upon his own person. Early in the morning and late at night he was to be seen half out of the window, administering to the varied wants of his callow brood. After deep cogitation, East and his chum had spliced a knife on to the end of a fishing-rod; and having watched Martin out, had, after half an hour's severe sawing, cut the string by which the basket was suspended, and tumbled it on to the pavement below, with hideous remonstrance from the occupants. Poor Martin, returning from his short absence, collected the fragments and replaced his brood (except one whose neck had been broken in the descent) in their old location, suspending them this time by string and wire twisted together, defiant of any sharp instrument which his persecutors could command. But, like the Russian engineers at Sebastopol, East and his chum had an answer for every move of the adversary;

and the next day had mounted a gun in the shape of a pea-shooter upon the ledge of their window, trained so as to bear exactly upon the spot which Martin had to occupy while tending his nurselings. The moment he began to feed they began to shoot; in vain did the enemy himself invest in a pea-shooter, and endeavour to answer the fire while he fed the young birds with his other hand; his attention was divided, and his shots flew wild, while every one of theirs told on his face and hands, and drove him into howlings and imprecations. He had been driven to ensconce the nest in a corner of his already too well-filled den.

His door was barricaded by a set of ingenious bolts of his own invention, for the sieges were frequent by the neighbours when any unusually ambrosial odour spread itself from the den to the neighbouring studies. The door panels were in a normal state of smash, but the frame of the door resisted all besiegers, and behind it, the owner carried on his varied pursuits; much in the same state of mind, I should fancy, as a border-farmer lived in, in the days of old moss-troopers, when his hold might be summoned or his cattle carried off at any minute of night or day.

"Open, Martin, old boy—it's only I, Tom Brown."

"Oh, very well, stop a moment." One bolt went back. "You're sure East isn't there?"

"No, no, hang it, open." Tom gave a kick, the other bolt creaked, and he entered the den.

Den indeed it was, about five feet six inches long by five wide, and seven feet high. About six tattered school-books, and a few chemical books, Taxidermy, Stanley on Birds, and an odd volume of Bewick, the latter in much better preservation, occupied the top shelves. The other shelves, where they had not been cut away and used by the owner for other purposes, were fitted up for the abiding places of birds, beasts, and reptiles. There was no attempt at carpet or curtain. The table was entirely occupied by the great work of Martin, the electric machine, which was covered carefully with the remains of his table-cloth. The jackdaw cage occupied one wall, and the other was adorned by a small hatchet, a pair of climbing irons, and his tin candle-box, in which, he was for the time being, endeavoring to raise a hopeful young family of field-mice. As nothing should be let to lie useless, it was well that the candle-box was thus occupied, for can-

dles Martin never had. A pound was issued to him weekly, as to the other boys, but as candles were available capital, and easily exchangeable for birds'-eggs or young birds, Martin's pound invariably found its way in a few hours to Howlett's, the bird-fancier's in the Bilton road, who would give a hawk's or nightingale's egg, or young linnet, in exchange. Martin's ingenuity was therefore forever on the rack to supply himself with a light; just now he had hit upon a grand invention, and the den was lighted by a flaring cotton-wick issuing from a ginger-beer bottle full of some doleful composition. When light altogether failed him, Martin would loaf about by the fires in the passages or hall, after the manner of Diggs, and try to do his verses or learn his lines by the fire-light.

"Well, old boy, you haven't got any sweeter in the den this half. How that stuff in the bottle smells. Never mind, I ain't going to stop, but you come up after prayers to our study; you know young Arthur; we've got Gray's study, We'll have a good supper and talk about bird's-nesting."

Martin was evidently highly pleased at the invitation, and promised to be up without fail.

As soon as prayers were over, and the sixth and fifth-form boys had withdrawn to the aristocratic seclusion of their own room, and the rest, or democracy, had sat down to their supper in the hall; Tom and Arthur, having secured their allowances of bread and cheese, started on their feet to catch the eye of the præposter of the week, who remained in charge during supper, walking up and down the hall. He happened to be an easy-going fellow, so they got a pleasant nod to their "Please may I go out?" and away they scrambled to prepare for Martin a sumptuous banquet. This, Tom had insisted on, for he was in great delight on the occasion; the reason of which delight must be expounded. The fact was, that this was the first attempt at a friendship of his own which Arthur had made, and Tom hailed it as grand step. The ease with which he himself became hail-fellow-well-met with any body, and blundered into and out of twenty friendships a half-year, made him sometimes sorry and sometimes angry at Arthur's reserve and loneliness. True, Arthur was always pleasant, and even jolly, with any boys who came with Tom to their study; but Tom felt that it was only through him, as it were, that his chum

associated with others, and that but for him Arthur would have been dwelling in a wilderness. This increased his consciousness of responsibility; and though he hadn't reasoned it out and made it clear to himself, yet somehow he knew that this responsibility, this trust which he had taken on him without thinking about it, head-over-heels in fact, was the centre and turning-point of his school-life, that which was to make him or mar him; his appointed work and trial for the time being. And Tom was becoming a new boy, though with frequent tumbles in the dirt and perpetual hard battle with himself, and was daily growing in manfulness, and thoughtfulness, as every high-couraged and well-principled boy must, when he finds himself for the first time consciously at grips with self and the devil. Already he could turn almost without a sigh from the school gates, from which had just scampered off East and three or four others of his own particular set, bound for some jolly lark not quite according to law, and involving probably a row with louts, keepers, or farm-labourers, the skipping dinner or calling-over, some of Phœbe Jennings's beer, and a very possible flogging at the end of all as a relish. He had quite got

over the stage in which he would grumble to himself, "Well, hang it, it's very hard of the Doctor to have saddled me with Arthur. Why couldn't he have chummed him with Fogey, or Thomkin, or any of the fellows who never do anything but walk round the close, and finish their copies the first day they're set? But although all this was past, he often longed, and felt that he was right in longing, for more time for the legitimate pastimes of cricket, fives, bathing, and fishing within bounds, in which Arthur could not yet be his companion; and he felt that when the young'un (as he now generally called him) had found a pursuit and some other friend for himself, he should be able to give more time to the education of his own body with a clear conscience.

And now what he so wished for had come to pass; he almost hailed it as a special providence, (as indeed it was, but not for the reasons he gave for it—what providences are ?) that Arthur should have singled out Martin of all fellows, for a friend. "The old madman is the very fellow," thought he; "he will take him scrambling over half the country after birds' eggs and flowers, make him run and swim and

climb like an Indian, and not teach him a word of any thing bad, or keep him from his lessons. What luck!" And so, with more than his usual heartiness, he dived into his cupboard, and hauled out an old knuckle-bone of ham, and two or three bottles of beer, together with the solemn pewter, only used on state occasions; while Arthur, equally elated at the easy accomplishments of his first act of violation in the joint establishment, produced from his side a bottle of pickles, and a pot of jam, and cleared the table. In a minute or two the noise of the boys coming up from supper was heard, and Martin knocked and was admitted, bearing his bread and cheese, and the three fell to with hearty good will upon the viands, talking faster than they eat, for all shyness disappeared in a moment before Tom's bottled-beer and hospitable ways. "Here's Arthur, a regular young town-mouse, with a natural taste for the woods, Martin, longing to break his neck climbing trees, and with a passion for young snakes."

"Well I say," sputtered out Martin eagerly, "will you come to-morrow, both of you, to Caldecott's Spinney then, for I know of a kestrel's nest, up a fir tree—I can't get at it without

help; and, Brown, you can climb against any one."

"O yes, do let us go," said Arthur; I never saw a hawk's nest or a hawk's egg."

"You just come down to my study then, and I'll show you five sorts," said Martin.

"Aye, the Old madman has got the best collection in the house, out-and-out," said Tom; and then Martin, warming with unaccustomed good cheer and the chance of a convert, launched out into a proposed birds'-nesting campaign, betraying all manner of important secrets; a golden-crested wren's nest near Butlin's Mound, a moor-hen who was sitting on fourteen eggs in a pond down the Barbyroad, and a kingfisher's nest in a corner of the old canal above Brownsover Mill. He had heard, he said, that no one had ever got a kingfisher's nest out perfect, and that the Brtish Museum, or the Government, or somebody, had offered £100 to any one who could bring them a nest and eggs not damaged. In the middle of which astounding announcement, to which the others were listening with open ears, and already considering the application of the £100, a knock came to the door, and East's voice was heard craving admittance.

"There's Harry," said Tom, "we'll let him in—I'll keep him steady, Martin. I thought the old boy would smell out the supper.

The fact was, that Tom's heart had already smitten him, for not asking his 'fidus Achates' to the feast, although only an extempore affair; and though prudence and the desire to get Martin and Arthur together alone at first, had overcome his scruples, he was now heartily glad to open the door, broach another bottle of beer, and hand over the old ham-knuckle to the searching of his old friend's pocketknife.

"Ah, you greedy vagabonds," said East, with his mouth full, "I knew there was something going on, when I saw you cut off out of the hall so quick with your suppers. What a stunning tap, Tom! you are a wunner for bottling the swipes."

"I've had practice enough for the sixth in my time, and it's hard if I haven't picked up a wrinkle or two for my own benefit."

"Well old madman, and how goes the birds'-nesting campaign? How's Howlet. I expect the young rooks'll be out in another fortnight, and then my turn comes."

"There'll be no young rooks fit for pies for a

month yet; shows how much you know about it," rejoined Martin, who, though very good friends with East, regarded him with considerable suspicion for his propensity in practical jokes.

"Scud knows nothing and cares for nothing but grub and mischief," said Tom; "but young rook pie, 'specially when you've had to climb for them, is very pretty eating. However, I say, Scud, we're all going after a hawk's nest to-morrow, in Caldecott's Spinney, and if you'll come and behave yourself, we'll have a stunning climb."

"And a bathe in Aganippe. Hooray! I'm your man."

No, no; no bathing in Aganippe; that's where our betters go."

"Well, well, never mind. I'm for the kawk's nest and anything that turns up."

And the bottled-beer being finished, and his hunger appeased, East departed to his study, "that sneak Jones," as he informed them, who had just got into the sixth and occupied the next study, having instituted a nightly visitation upon East and his chum, to their no small discomfort.

When he was gone, Martin rose to follow, but Tom stopped him. "No one goes near New Row," said he, "so you may just as well stop here and do your verses, and then we'll have some more talk. We'll be no end quiet; besides no præposter comes here now—we haven't been visited once this half."

So the table was cleared, the cloth restored, and the three fell to work with Gradus and dictionary upon the morning's vulgus.

They were three very fair examples of the way in which such tasks were done at Rugby, in the consulship of Plancus. And doubtless the method is little changed, for there is nothing new under the sun, especially at schools.

Now be it known unto all you boys who are at schools which do not rejoice in the time-honoured institution of the vulgus, (commonly supposed to have been established by William of Wykeham at Winchester, and imported to Rugby by Arnold, more for the sake of the lines which were learnt by heart with it, than for its intrinsic value, as I've always understood,) that it is a short exercise, in Greek or Latin verse, on a given subject, the minimum number of lines being fixed for each form. The master of the form gave out

at fourth lesson on the previous day the subject for next morning's vulgus, and at first lesson each boy had to bring his vulgus ready to be looked over; and with the vulgus, a certain number of lines from one of the Latin or Greek poets, then being construed in the form, had to be got by heart. The master at first lesson, called up each boy in the form in order, and put him on in the lines. If he couldn't say them, or seem to say them, by reading them off the master's or some other boy's book who stood near, he was sent back, and went below all the boys who did so say or seem to say them; but in either case his vulgus was looked over by the master, who gave and entered in his book, to the credit or discredit of the boy, so many marks as the composition merited. At Rugby, vulgus and lines were the first lesson every other day in the week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays; and as there were thirty-eight weeks in the school year, it is obvious to the meanest capacity that the master of each form had to set one hundred and fourteen subjects every year, two hundred and twenty-eight every two years, and so on. Now to persons of moderate invention this was a considerable task, and human

nature being prone to repeat itself, it will not be wondered that the masters gave the same subjects sometimes over again after a certain lapse of time. To meet and rebuke this bad habit of the masters, the school-boy mind, with its accustomed ingenuity, had invented an elaborate system of tradition. Almost every boy kept his own vulgus written out in a book, and these books were duly handed down from boy to boy, till (if the tradition has gone on till now) I suppose the popular boys, in whose hands bequeathed vulgus-books have accumulated, are prepared with three or four vulguses on any subject in heaven or earth, or in "more worlds than one," which an unfortunate master can pitch upon. At any rate, such lucky fellows generally had one for themselves and one for a friend in my time. The only objection to the traditionary method of doing your vulgus was, the risk that the successions might have become confused, and so that you and another follower of tradition should show up the same identical vulgus some fine morning, in which case, when it happened, considerable grief was the result—but when did such risks hinder boys or men from short cuts and pleasant paths?

Now in the study that night, Tom was the upholder of the traditionary method of vulgus doing. He carefully produced two large vulgus-books, and began diving into them, and picking out a line here, and an ending there (tags as they were vulgarly called,) till he had gotten all that he thought he could make fit. He then proceeded to patch his tags together with the help of his Gradus, producing an incongruous and feeble result of eight elegiac lines, the minimum quantity for his form, and finishing up with two highly moral lines extra, making ten in all, which he cribbed entire from one of his books, beginning "O genus humanum," and which he himself must have used a dozen times before, whenever an unfortunate or wicked hero, of whatever nation or language under the sun, was the subject. Indeed he began to have great doubts whether the master wouldn't remember them, and so only threw them in as extra lines, because in any case they would call off attention from the other tags, and if detected, being extra lines, he wouldn't be sent back to do two more in their place, while if they passed muster again he would get marks for them.

The second method, pursued by Martin, may

be called the dogged, or prosaic method. He, no more than Tom, took any pleasure in the task, but having no old vulgus-books of his own or any one's else, could not follow the traditionary method, for which, too, as Tom remarked, he hadn't the genius. Martin then proceeded to write down eight lines in English, of the most matter-of-fact kind, the first that came into his head; and to convert these, line by line, by main force of Gradus and dictionary, into Latin that would scan. This was all he cared for, to produce eight lines with no false quantities or concords: whether the words were apt, or what the sense was, mattered nothing; and, as the article was all new, not a line beyond the minimum did the followers of the dogged method ever produce.

The third, or artistic method, was Arthur's. He considered first what point in the character or event which was the subject could most neatly be brought out within the limits of a vulgus, trying always to get his idea into the eight lines, but not binding himself to ten or even twelve lines if he couldn't do this. He then set to work, as much as possible without Gradus or other help, to clothe his idea in appropriate Latin or Greek, and would not be satisfied till

he had polished it well up with the aptest and most poetic words and phrases he could get at.

A fourth method indeed was in use in the school, but of too simple a kind to require description. It may be called the vicarious method, obtained amongst big boys of lazy or bullying habits, and consisted simply in making clever boys whom they could thrash, do their whole vulgus for them, and construe it to them afterwards; which latter is a method not to be encouraged, and which I strongly advise you all not to practice. Of the others you will find the traditionary most troublesome, unless you can steal your vulguses whole (experto crede) and that the artistic method pays the best, both in marks and other ways.

The vulguses being finished by nine o'clock, and Martin having rejoiced above measure in the abundance of light, and of Gradus and dictionary, and other conveniences almost unknown to him for getting through the work, and having been pressed by Arthur to come and do his verses there whenever he liked, the three boys went down to Martin's den, and Arthur was initiated into the lore of birds' eggs to his great delight. The exquisite colouring and forms astonished

and charmed him who had scarcely ever seen any but a hen's egg or an ostrich's, and by the time he was lugged away to bed he had learned the names of at least twenty sorts, and dreamt of the glorious perils of tree-climbing, and that he had found a roc's egg in the island as big as Sinbad's, and clouded like a tit-lark's in blowing which, Martin and he had nearly been drowned in the yolk.

CHAPTER IV.

FEVER IN THE SCHOOL.

"This our hope for all that's mortal,
And we too shall burst the bond;
Death keeps watch beside the portal,
But 'tis life that dwells beyond."

JOHN STERLING.

Two years have passed since the events recorded in the last chapter, and the end of the summer half-year is again drawing on. Martin has left and gone on a cruise in the South Pacific, in one of his uncle's ships; the old magpie, as disreputable as ever, his last bequest to Arthur, lives in the joint study. Arthur is nearly sixteen, and at the head of the twenty, having gone up the school at the rate of a form a half-year. East and Tom have been much more deliberate in their progress, and are only a little way up the fifth form. Great strapping boys they are, but still thorough boys, filling about the same place in the house that young Brooke filled when they were new boys, and much the same sort of fellows. Constant intercourse with

Arthur has done much for both of them, especially for Tom; but much remains yet to be done, if they are to get all the good out of Rugby which is to be got there in these times. Arthur is still frail and delicate, with more spirit than body; but thanks to his intimacy with Tom and Martin, has learned to swim, and run, and play cricket, and has never hurt himself by too much reading.

One evening as they were all sitting down to supper in the fifth-form room, some one started a report that a fever had broken out at one of the boarding-houses; "they say," he added, "that Thompson is very ill, and that Dr. Robertson has been sent for from Northampton."

"Then we shall all be sent home," cried another. "Hurrah! five weeks' extra holidays, and no fifth-form examination!"

"I hope not," said Tom; "there'll be no Marylebone match then at the end of the half."

Some thought one thing, some another, many didn't believe the report; but the next day, Tuesday, Dr. Robertson arrived, and stayed all day, and had long conferences with the Doctor.

On Wednesday morning, after prayers, the Doctor addressed the whole school. There were

several cases of fever in different houses, he said, but Dr. Robertson after the most careful examination had assured him that it was not infectious, and that if proper care were taken there could be no reason for stopping the school work at present. The examinations were just coming on, and it would be very unadvisable to break up now. However, any boys who chose to do so were at liberty to write home, and, if their parents wished it, to leave at once. He should send the whole school home if the fever spread.

The next day Arthur sickened, but there was no other case. Before the end of the week thirty or forty boys had gone, but the rest stayed on. There was a general wish to please the Doctor, and a feeling that it was cowardly to run away.

On the Saturday Thompson died, in the bright afternoon, while the cricket-match was going on as usual on the big-side ground; the Doctor, coming from his death-bed, passed along the gravel-walk at the side of the close, but no one knew what had happened till the next day. At morning lecture it began to be rumored, and by afternoon chapel was known generally; and a feeling of seriousness and awe at the actual

presence of death among them, came over the whole school. In all the long years of his ministry the Doctor perhaps never spoke words which sank deeper than some of those in that day's sermon. "When I came yesterday from visiting all but the very death-bed of him who has been taken from us, and looked around upon all the familiar objects and scenes within our own ground, where your common amusements were going on, with your common cheerfulness and activity, I felt there was nothing painful in witnessing that; it did not seem in any way shocking or out of tune with those feelings which the sight of a dying Christian must be supposed to awaken. The unsuitableness in point of natural feeling between scenes of mourning and scenes of liveliness did not at all present itself. But I did feel that if at that moment any of those faults had been brought before me which sometimes occur amongst us; had I heard that any of you had been guilty of falsehood, or of drunkenness, or of any other such sin; had I heard from any quarter the language of profaneness, or of unkindness, or of indecency; had I heard or seen any signs of that wretched folly, which courts the laugh of fools by affecting not to dread evil

and not to care for good, then the unsuitableness of any of these things with the scene I had just quitted would indeed have been most intensely painful. And why? Not because such things would really have been worse than at any other time, but because at such a moment the eyes are opened really to know good and evil, because we then feel what it is so to live as that death becomes an infinite blessing, and what it is so to live also, that it were good for us if we had never been born.

Tom had gone into the chapel in sickening anxiety about Arthur, but he came out cheered and strengthened by those grand words, and walked up alone to their study. And when he sat down and looked round, and saw Arthur's straw-hat and cricket-jacket hanging on their pegs, and marked all his little neat arrangements, not one of which had been disturbed, the tears indeed rolled down his cheeks, but they were calm and blessed tears, and he repeated to himself, "Yes, Geordie's eyes are opened—he knows what it is so to live as that death becomes an infinite blessing. But do I? Oh God, can I bear to lose him?

The week passed mournfully away. No more

boys sickened, but Arthur was reported worse each day, and his mother arrived early in the week. Tom made many appeals to be allowed to see him, and several times tried to get up to the sick-room; but the housekeeper was always in the way, and at last spoke to the Doctor, who kindly, but peremptorily forbade him.

FROM STANLEY'S LIFE OF ARNOLD.

It was after a season of sickness of this kind, that Dr. Arnold returning one morning from the death-bed of one of the boys, was much troubled to find that the change in his feelings from attendance on this bed of sickness and death had been very great; he thought there ought not to be such a contrast, and, that it was probably owing to the school work not being sufficiently sanctified to God's glory—that if, it were in truth a *religious* work, the transition to it from a death-bed would be slight; he therefore intended for the future to offer an especial prayer before the first lesson, that the day's work might be undertaken and carried on, solely to the glory of God and their improvements.

The subjoined is the prayer, used ever after, until the mournful day of Dr. Arnold's death:—

O Lord, who by Thy Holy Apostle has taught us to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, and to Thy glory, give Thy blessing, we pray Thee to this our daily work, that we may do it in faith and heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. All our powers of body and mind are thine, and we would fain devote them to Thy service. Sanctify them and the work in which they are

engaged; let us not be slothful, but fervent in spirit; and do thou, O Lord, so bless our efforts, that they may bring forth in us the fruits of true wisdom.

Strengthen the faculties of our minds, and dispose us to exert them; but, let us always remember to exert them for Thy glory, and save us from all pride or vanity, or reliance upon our own powers or wisdom. Teach us to seek after truth, and enable us to gain it; but grant that we may ever speak the truth in love; that, while we know earthly things, we may know Thee, and be known by Thee, in and through Thy Son Jesus Christ. Give us this day Thy Holy Spirit, that we may be thine in body and in spirit, in all our work and in all our refreshments, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord. Amen.

Thompson was buried on the Tuesday, and the burial service, so soothing and grand always, but beyond all words solemn when read over a boy's grave to his companions, brought Tom much comfort, and many strange new thoughts and longings. He went back to his regular life, and played cricket and bathed as usual: it seemed to him that this was the right thing to do, and the new thoughts and longings became more brave and healthy for the effort. The crisis came on Saturday, the day week that Thompson had died; and during that long afternoon Tom sat in his study reading his Bible, and going every half-hour to the housekeeper's

room, expecting each time to hear that the gentle and brave little spirit had gone home. But God had work for Arthur to do; the crisis passed—on Sunday evening he was declared out of danger; on Monday he sent a message to Tom that he was almost well, had changed his room, and was to be allowed to see him the next day.

It was evening when the housekeeper summoned him to the sick-room. Arthur was lying on the sofa by the open window, through which the rays of the western sun stole gently, lighting up his white face and golden hair. Tom remembered a German picture of an angel which he knew; often had he thought how transparent and golden and spirit-like it was; and he shuddered to think how like it Arthur looked, and felt a shock as if his blood had all stopped short, as he realized how near the other world his friend must have been to look like that. Never till that moment had he felt how his little chum had twined himself round his heart-strings; and as he stole gently across the room, and knelt down, and put his arm round Arthur's head on the pillow, felt ashamed and half angry at his own red and brown face, and the bounding

sense of health and power which filled every fibre of his body, and made every moment of mere living, a joy to him. He needn't have troubled himself, it was this very strength and power so different from his own which drew Arthur so to him.

Arthur laid his thin white hand, on which the blue veins stood out so plainly, on Tom's great brown fist, and smiled at him; and then looked out of the window again, as if he couldn't bear to lose a moment of the sunset, into the tops of the great feathery elms, round which the rooks were circling and clanging, returned in flocks from their evening's foraging parties. The elms rustled, the sparrows in the ivy just outside the window chirped and fluttered about, quarrelling and making it up again; the rooks, young and old, talked in chorus, and the merry shouts of the boys, and the sweet click of the cricket-bats, came up cheerily from below.

"Dear George," said Tom, "I am so glad to be let up to see you at last. I've tried hard to come so often, but they wouldn't let me before."

"Oh, I know, Tom; Mary has told me every day about you, and how she was obliged to make the Doctor speak to you to keep you away.

I'm very glad you didn't get up, for you might have caught it, and you couldn't stand being ill with all the matches going on. And you're in the eleven, too, I hear—I'm so glad."

"Yes, ain't it jolly?" said Tom, proudly; I'm ninth too. I made forty at the last pie-match, and caught three fellows out. So I was put in above Jones and Tucker. Tucker's so savage, for he was head of the twenty-two.

"Well, I think you ought to be higher yet," said Arthur, who was as jealous for the renown of Tom in games, as Tom was for his as a scholar.

"Never mind, I don't care about cricket or any thing now you are getting well, Geordie; and I shouldn't have been hurt, I know, if they'd have let me come up,—nothing hurts me. But you'll get about now directly, won't you? You won't believe how clean I've kept the study. All your things are just as you left them; and I feed the old magpie just when you used, though I have to come in from big-side for him, the old rip. He won't look pleased, all I can do, and sticks his head first on one side and then on the other, and blinks at me before he'll begin to eat, till I'm half inclined to box his ears. And

whenever East comes in, you should see him hop off to the window, dot and go one, though Harry wouldn't touch a feather of him now."

Arthur laughed. "Old Gravey has a good memory, he can't forget the sieges of poor Martin's den in old times. He paused a moment and then went on. "You can't think how often I've been thinking of old Martin since I've been ill; I suppose one's mind gets restless, and likes to wander off to strange unknown places. I wonder what queer new pets the old boy has got; how he must be revelling in the thousand new birds, beasts, and fishes." Tom felt a pang of jealousy, but kicked it out in a moment. "Fancy him on a South-sea island, with the Cherokees or Patagonians, or some such wild niggers;" (Tom's ethnology and geography were faulty, but sufficient for his needs;) "they'll make the old madman cock medicine-man, and tattoo him all over. Perhaps he's cutting about now all blue, and has a squaw and a wigwam. He'll improve their boomarangs, and be able to throw them too, without having old Thomas sent after him by the Doctor to take them away."

Arthur laughed at the remembrance of the boomarang story, but then looked grave again,

and said, "He'll convert all the Island, I know."

"Yes if he don't blow it up first."

"Do you remember, Tom, how you and East used to laugh at him and chaff him, because he said he was sure the rooks all had calling-over, or prayers, or something of the sort, when the locking-up bell rang. Well, I declare," said Arthur, looking up seriously into Tom's laughing eyes, "I do think he was right. Since I've been lying here I've watched them every night; and do you know they really do come and perch all of them just about locking-up time; and then first there's a regular chorus of caws, and then they stop a bit, and one old fellow, or perhaps two or three in different trees, caw solos, and then off they all go again, fluttering about and cawing any how till they roost."

"I wonder if the old blackies do talk?" said Tom, looking up at them. "How they must abuse me and East, and pray for the Doctor for stopping the slinging."

"There! look! look!" cried Arthur, "don't you see the old fellow without a tail coming up? Martin used to call him 'the clerk.' He can't steer himself. You never saw such fun as he is in a high wind, when he can't steer himself

home, and gets carried right past the trees, and has to bear up again and again before he can perch."

The locking-up bell began to toll, and the two boys were silent and listened to it. The sound soon carried Tom off to the river and the woods, and he began to go over in his mind the many occasions on which he had heard that toll coming faintly down the breeze, and had to pack up his rod in a hurry and make a run for it, to get in before the gates were shut. He was roused with a start from his memories by Arthur's voice, gentle and weak from his late illness.

"Tom, will you be angry if I talk to you very seriously?"

"No, dear old boy, not I. But ain't you faint, Arthur, or ill? What can I get for you? Don't say anything to hurt yourself now, you are very weak; let me come up again?"

"No, no, I shan't hurt myself; I'd sooner speak to you now, if you don't mind. I've asked Mary to tell the Doctor that you are with me, so you needn't go down to calling-over; and I mayn't have another chance, for I shall most likely have to go home for change of air to get

well, and mayn't come back this half."

"Oh, do you think you must go away before the end of the half? I'm so sorry. It's more than five weeks yet to the holidays, and all the fifth-form examination and half the cricket matches to come yet. And what shall I do all that time alone in our study? Why, Arthur, it will be more than twelve weeks before I see you again. Oh, hang it, I can't stand that. Besides who's to keep me up to working at the examination books? I shall come out bottom of the form, as sure as eggs is eggs.'

Tom was rattling on, half in joke, half in earnest, for he wanted to get Arthur out of his serious vein, thinking it would do him harm; but Arthur broke in—

"Oh, please Tom, stop, or you'll drive all I had to say out of my head. And I'm already horribly afraid I'm going to make you angry."

"Don't gammon, young'un," rejoined Tom, (the use of the old name, dear to him from old recollections, made Arthur start and smile, and feel quite happy;) "you know you ain't afraid and you've never made me angry since the first month we chummed together. Now I'm going to be quite sober for a quarter of an hour,

which is more than I am once in a year, so make the most of it; heave ahead, and pitch into me right and left."

Dear Tom, I ain't going to pitch into you," said Arthur piteously; "and it seems so cocky in me to be advising you, who've been my backbone ever since I've been at Rugby, and have made the school a paradise to me. Ah, I see I shall never do it, unless I go head-over-heels at once, as you said when you taught me to swim. Tom, I want you to give up using vulgus-books and cribs."

Arthur sank back on to his pillow with a sigh, as if the effort had been great; but the worst was now over, and he looked straight at Tom, who was evidently taken aback. He leant his elbows on his knees and stuck his hands into his hair, whistled a verse of Billy Taylor, and then was quite silent for another minute. Not a shade crossed his face, but he was clearly puzzled. At last he looked up and caught Arthur's anxious look, took his hand, and said simply—

"Why, young'un?"

"Because you're the honestest boy in Rugby, and that ain't honest."

"I don't see that."

What were you sent to Rugby for?"

"Well, I don't know exactly—nobody ever told me. I suppose because all boys are sent to a public school in England."

"But what do you think yourself? What do you want to do here and to carry away?"

Tom thought a minute. "I want to be A 1 at cricket and football, and all the other games, and to make my hands keep my head against any fellow, lout or gentleman. I want to get into the sixth before I leave, and please the Doctor; and I want to carry away just as much Latin and Greek as will take me through Oxford respectably. There now, young'un, I never thought of it before, but that's pretty much my figure. Ain't it all on the square? What have you got to say to that?"

"Why, that you're pretty sure to do all that you want then."

"Well, I hope so. But you've forgot one thing, that I want to leave behind me. I want to leave behind me," said Tom, speaking slow and looking much moved, "the name of a fellow who never bullied a little boy, or turned his back on a big one."

Arthur pressed his hand, and after a moment's silence went on: "You say, Tom, you want to please the Doctor. Now do you want to please him by what he thinks you do, or by what you really do?"

"By what I really do, of course."

"Does he think you use cribs and vulgus-books?"

Tom felt at once that his flank was turned, but he couldn't give in. "He was at Winchester himself, said he, "he knows all about it'.'

"Yes, but does he think *you* use them? Do you think he approves of it?"

"You young villain," said Tom, shaking his fist at Arthur half vexed and half pleased, "I never think about it. Hang it—there, perhaps he don't. Well, I suppose he don't."

Arthur saw that he had got his point; he knew his friend well, and was wise in silence as in speech. He only said, "I would sooner have the Doctor's good opinion of me as I really am, than any man's in the world."

After another minute Tom began again: "Look here, young'un, how on earth am I to get time to play the matches this half, if I give up cribs? We're in the middle of that long

crabbed chorus in the Agamemnon, I can only just make head or tail of it with the crib. Then there's Pericles' speech coming on in Thucydides, and the 'Birds' to get up for the examination, besides the Tacitus. Tom groaned at the thought of his accumulated labours. "I say, young'un, there's only five weeks or so left to holidays, mayn't I go on as usual for this half? I'll tell the Doctor about it some day, or you may."

Arthur looked out of the window; the twilight had come on and all was silent. He repeated in a low voice, "In this thing the Lord, pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing."

Not a word more was said on the subject, and the boys were again silent. One of those blessed short silences, in which the resolves which colour a life are so often taken.

Tom was the first to break it. "You've been very ill indeed, haven't you, Geordie?" said he with a mixture of awe and curiosity, feeling as if his friend had been in some strange place or scene, of which he could form no idea, and full

of the memory of his own thoughts during the last week.

"Yes, very. I'm sure the Doctor thought I was going to die. He gave me the Sacrament last Sunday, and you can't think what he is when one is ill. He said such brave, and tender, and gentle things to me, I felt quite light and strong after it, and never had any more fear. My mother brought our old medical man, who attended me when I was a poor sickly child; he said my constitution was quite changed, and that I'm fit for anything now. If it hadn't, I couldn't have stood three days of this illness. That's all thanks to you, and the games you've made me fond of."

"More thanks to old Martin," said Tom; "he's been your real friend."

"Nonsense, Tom, he never could have done for me what you have."

"Well, I don't know, I did little enough. Did they tell you—you won't mind hearing it now, I know—that poor Thompson died last week? The other three boys are getting quite round, like you."

"Oh, yes, I heard of it."

Then Tom, who was quite full of it, told

Arthur of the burial service in the chapel, and how it had impressed him, and, he believed, all the other boys. "And though the Doctor never said a word about it," said he, "and it was a half-holiday and match day, there wasn't a game played in the close all the afternoon, and the boys all went about as if it were Sunday."

"I'm very glad of it," said Arthur. "But, Tom, I've had such strange thoughts about death lately. I've never told a soul of them, not even my mother. Sometimes I think they're wrong, but, do you know, I don't think in my heart I could be very sorry at the death of any of my friends."

Tom was taken quite aback. "What in the world is the young'un after now," thought he; "I've swallowed a good many of his crotchets, but this altogether beats me. He can't be quite right in his head." He didn't want to say a word, and shifted about uneasily in the dark; however, Arthur seemed to be waiting for an answer, so at last he said, "I don't think I quite see what you mean, Geordie. One's told so often to think about death, that I've tried it on sometimes, especially this last week. But we won't talk of it now. I'd better go—you're getting tired, and I shall do you harm."

"No, no, indeed I ain't, Tom; you must stop till nine, there's only twenty minutes. I've settled you shall stop till nine. And oh! do let me talk to you—I must talk to you. I see it's just as I feared. You think I'm half mad—don't you now?"

"Well, I did think it odd what you said, Geordie, as you ask me."

Arthur paused a moment, and then said quickly, "I'll tell you how it all happened. At first, when I was sent to the sick-room and found I had really got the fever, I was terribly frightened. I thought I should die, and I could not face it for a moment. I don't think it was sheer cowardice at first, but I thought how hard it was to be taken away from my mother and sisters and you all, just as I was beginning to see my way to many things, and to feel that I might be a man and do a man's work. To die without having fought, and worked, and given one's life away, was too hard to bear. I got terribly impatient, and accused God of injustice, and strove to justify myself; and the harder I strove the deeper I sank. Then the image of my dear father often came across me, but I turned from it. Whenever it came, a heavy numbing throb

seemed to take hold of my heart, and say, dead —dead—dead. And I cried out, 'The living, the living shall praise Thee O God; the dead cannot praise Thee. There is no work in the grave; in the night no man can work. But I can work. I can do great things. I *will* do great things. Why wilt thou slay me?" And so I struggled and plunged, deeper and deeper, and went down into a living black tomb. I was alone there, with no power to stir or think; alone with myself; beyond the reach of all human fellowship; beyond Christ's reach, I thought, in my nightmare. You, who are brave, and bright, and strong, can have no idea of that agony. Pray to God you never may. Pray as for your life."

Arthur stopped—from exhaustion, Tom thought; but what between his fear lest Arthur should hurt himself, his awe, and longing for him to go on, he couldn't ask or stir to help him.

Presently he went on, but quite calm and slow. "I don't know how long I was in that state. For more than a day I know, for I was quite conscious, and lived my outer life all the time, and took my medicines, and spoke to my

mother, and heard what they said. But I didn't take much note of time, I thought time was over for me, and that that tomb was what was beyond. Well, on last Sunday morning, as I seemed to lie in that tomb, alone, as I thought, for ever and ever, the black dead wall was cleft in two, and I was caught up and borne through into the light by some great power, some living mighty spirit. Tom, do you remember the living creatures and the wheels in Ezekiel? It was just like that: 'when they went I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host; when they stood they let down their wings'—'and they went every one straight forward; whither the spirit was to go they went, and they turned not when they went.' And we rushed through the bright air, which was full of myriads of living creatures, and paused on the brink of a great river. And the power held me up, and I knew that that great river was the grave, and death dwelt there; but not the death I had met in the black tomb, that I felt was gone forever. For on the other bank of the great river I saw men and women and children rising up pure and

bright, and the tears were wiped from their eyes, and they put on glory and strength, and all weariness and pain fell away. And beyond were a multitude which no man could number, and they worked at some great work; and they who rose from the river went on and joined in the work. They all worked, and each worked in a different way, but all at the same work. And I saw there my father, and the men in the old town whom I knew when I was a child; many a hard stern man, who never came to church, and whom they called atheist and infidel. There they were, side by side with my father, whom I had seen toil and die for them, and women and little children, and the seal was on the foreheads of all. And I longed to see what the work was, and could not; so I tried to plunge in the river, for I thought I would join them, but I could not. Then I looked about to see how they got into the river. And this I could not see, but I saw myriads on this side, and they too worked, and I knew that it was the same work; and the same seal was on their foreheads. And though I saw that there was toil and anguish in the work of these, and that most that were working were blind and feeble,

yet I longed no more to plunge into the river, but more and more to know what the work was. And as I looked I saw my mother and my sisters, and I saw the Doctor, and you, Tom, and hundreds more whom I knew; and at last I saw myself too, and I was toiling and doing ever so little a piece of the great work. Then it all melted away, and the power left me, and as it left me I thought I heard a voice say, 'The vision is for an appointed time; though it tarry, wait for it, for in the end it shall speak and not lie, it shall surely come, it shall not tarry.' It was early morning I know then, it was so quiet and cool, and my mother was fast asleep in the chair by my bedside; but it wasn't only a dream of mine. I know it wasn't a dream. Then I fell into a deep sleep, and only woke after afternoon chapel; and the Doctor came and gave me the Sacrament, as I told you. I told him and my mother I should get well—I knew I should; but I couldn't tell them why." "Tom, said Arthur, gently, after another minute, "do you see why I could not grieve now to see my dearest friend die? It can't be—it isn't all fever or illness. God would never have let me see it so clear if it wasn't true. I don't understand it all

yet—it will take me my life and longer to do that—to find out what the work is."

When Arthur stopped, there was a long pause. Tom could not speak, he was almost afraid to breathe, lest he should break the train of Arthur's thoughts. He longed to hear more, and to ask questions. In another minute nine o'clock struck, and a gentle tap at the door called them both back into the world again. They did not answer, however, for a moment, and so the door opened, and a lady came in carrying a candle.

She went straight to the sofa, and took hold of Arthur's hand, and then stooped down and kissed him.

"My dearest boy, you feel a little feverish again. Why didn't you have lights? You've talked too much and excited yourself in the dark."

"Oh no, mother, you can't think how well I feel. I shall start with you to-morrow for Devonshire. But, mother, here's my friend, here's Tom Brown—you know him?"

"Yes, indeed, I've known him for years," she said, and held out her hand to Tom, who was now standing up behind the sofa. This was Arthur's mother. Tall and slight and fair, with masses of golden hair drawn back from the

broad white forehead, and the calm blue eye meeting his so deep and open—the eye that he knew so well, for it was his friend's over again, and the lovely tender mouth that trembled while he looked. She stood there a woman of thirty-eight, old enough to be his mother, and one whose face showed the lines which must be written on the faces of good men's wives and widows—but he thought he had never seen anything so beautiful. He couldn't help wondering if Arthur's sisters were like her.

Tom held her hand, and looked straight in her face; he could neither let it go nor speak.

"Now, Tom," said Arthur, laughing, "where are your manners? you'll stare my mother out of countenance." Tom dropped the little hand with a sigh. "There, sit down; both of you. Here, dearest mother, there's room here," and he made a place on the sofa for her. "Tom, you needn't go; I'm sure you won't be called up at first lesson." Tom felt that he would risk being floored at every lesson for the rest of his natural school-life, sooner than go; so he sat down. "And now," said Arthur, "I have realized one of the dearest wishes of my life—to see you two together."

And then he led away the talk to their home in Devonshire, and the red bright earth, and the deep green combes, and the peat streams like cairn-gorm pebbles, and the wild moor with its high cloudy Tors for a giant background to the picture—till Tom got jealous, and stood up for the clear chalk streams, and the emerald water meadows and great elms and willows of the dear old Royal county, as he gloried to call it. And the mother sat, quiet and loving, rejoicing in their life. The quarter-to-ten struck, and the bell rang for bed, before they had well begun their talk as it seemed.

Then Tom rose with a sigh to go.

"Shall I see you in the morning, Geordie?" said he, as he shook his friend's hand. "Never mind though, you'll be back next half, and I shan't forget the house of Rimmon."

Arthur's mother got up and walked with him to the door, and there gave him her hand again, and again his eyes met that deep loving look, which was like a spell upon him. Her voice trembled slightly as she said "Good night—you are one who knows what our Father has promised to the friend of the widow and the

fatherless. May He deal with you as you have dealt with me and mine!"

Tom was quite upset; he mumbled something about owing every thing good in him to Geordie —looked in her face again, pressed her hand to his lips, and rushed down stairs to his study, where he sat till old Thomas came kicking at the door, to tell him his allowance would be stopped if he didn't go off to bed. (It would have been stopped anyhow, but that he was a great favourite with the old gentleman, who loved to come out in the afternoons into the close to Tom's wicket, and bowl slow twisters to him, and talk of the glories of by-gone Surrey heroes, with whom he had played in former generations.) So Tom roused himself and took up his candle to go to bed; and then, for the first time, was aware of a beautiful new fishing-rod, with old Eton's mark on it, and a splendidly bound Bible, which lay on his table, on the title-page of which was written—"TOM BROWN, from his affectionate and grateful friends, Frances Jane Arthur; George Arthur."

I leave you all to guess how he slept, and what he dreamt of.

CHAPTER VI.

HARRY EAST'S DILEMMAS AND DELIVERANCES.

> "The Holy Supper is kept indeed,
> In whatso we share with another's need—
> Not that which we give, but that we share,
> For the gift without the giver is bare:
> Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,
> Himself, his hungering neighbour, and me."
>
> LOWELL—*The Vision of Sir Launfal*, p. 11.

THE next morning after breakfast, Tom, East, and Gower met as usual to learn their second lesson together. Tom had been considering how to break his proposal of giving up the crib to the others, and having found no better way (as indeed none better can ever be found by man or boy), told them simply what had happened; how he had been to see Arthur, who had talked to him upon the subject, and what he had said, and for his part he had made up his mind and wasn't going to use cribs any more. And not being quite sure of his ground, took the high and pathetic tone, and was proceeding to say, "how that having learnt his lessons with them for so many years, it would grieve him much to put an end to the arrangement, and he hoped at any

rate that if they wouldn't go on with him, they should still be just as good friends, and respect one another's motives—but—"

Here the other boys, who had been listening with open eyes and ears, burst in—

"Stuff and nonsense!" cried Gower. "Here, East, get down the crib and find the place."

"Oh, Tommy, Tommy!" said East, proceeding to do as he was bidden, "that it should ever have come to this. I knew Authur'd be the ruin of you some day, and you of me. And now the time's come"—and he made a doleful face.

"I don't know about the ruin," answered Tom; "I know that you and I would have had the sack long ago, if it hadn't been for him. And you know it as well as I."

"Well, we were in a baddish way before he came, I own, but this new crotchet of his is past a joke."

"Let's give it a trial, Harry; come—you know how often he has been right and we wrong."

"Now don't you two be jawing away about young Square-toes," struck in Gower. "He's no end of a sucking wiseacre, I dare say, but we've no time to lose, and I've got the fives'-court at half-past nine."

"I say, Gower," said Tom, appealingly, "be a good fellow, and let's try if we can't get on without the crib."

"What! in this chorus? Why we shan't get through ten lines."

"I say, Tom," cried East, having hit on a new idea, "don't you remember when we were in the upper-fourth, and old Momus caught me construing off the leaf of a crib which I'd torn out and put in my book, and which would float out on to the floor; he sent me up to be flogged for it?"

"Yes, I remember it very well."

"Well, the Doctor, after he'd flogged me, told me himself that he didn't flog me for using a translation, but for taking it into lesson, and using it there, when I hadn't learnt a word before I came in. He said there was no harm in using a translation to get a clue to hard passages, if you'd tried all you could first to make them out without."

"Did he though?" said Tom: "then Arthur must be wrong."

"Of course he is," said Gower, "the little prig. We'll only use the crib when we can't construe without it. Go ahead, East."

And on this agreement they started. Tom satisfied with having made his confession, and not sorry to have a *locus pœnitentiœ*, and not to be deprived altogether of the use of his old and faithful friend.

The boys went on as usual, each taking a sentence in turn, and the crib being handed to the one whose turn it was to construe. Of course Tom couldn't object to this, as, was it not simply lying there to be appealed to in case the sentence should prove too hard altogether for the construer? But it must be owned that Gower and East did not make very tremendous exertions to conquer their sentences before having recourse to its help. Tom, however, with the most heroic virtue and gallantry, rushed into his sentence, searching in a high-minded manner for nominative and verb, and turning over his dictionary frantically for the first hard word which stopped him. But in the meantime, Gower, who was bent on getting to fives, would peep quietly into the crib, and then suggest, "Don't you think this is the meaning?" "I think you must take it this way, Brown;" and as Tom didn't see his way to not profiting by these suggestions, the lesson went on about as quickly as usual, and

Gower was able to start for the fives'-court within five minutes of the half hour.

When Tom and East were left face to face, they looked at one another for a minute, Tom puzzled, and East chock full of fun, and then burst into a roar of laughter.

"Well, Tom," said East, recovering himself, "I don't see any objection to the new way. It's about as good as the old one, I think; besides, the advantage it gives one of feeling virtuous, and looking down on one's neighbours."

Tom shoved his hand into his back hair. I ain't so sure," said he; "you two fellows carried me off my legs; I don't think we really tried one sentence fairly. Are you sure you remember what the Doctor said to you?"

"Yes. And I'll swear I couldn't make out one of my sentences to-day. No, nor never could. I really don't remember," said East, speaking slowly and impressively, "to have come across one Latin or Greek sentence this half that I could go and construe by the light of nature. Whereby I am sure Providence intended cribs to be used."

"The thing to find out," said Tom, meditatively, "is, how long one ought to grind at a

sentence without looking at the crib. Now I think if one fairly looks out all the words one don't know, and then can't hit it, that's enough."

"To be sure, Tommy," said East, demurely, but with a merry twinkle in his eye. "Your new doctrine too, old fellow," added he, "when one comes to think of it, is a cutting at the root of all school morality. You'll take away mutual help, brotherly love, or in the vulgar tongue giving construes, which I hold to be one of our highest virtues. For how can you distinguish between getting a construe from another boy, and using a crib? Hang it, Tom, if you're going to deprive all our school-fellows of the chance of exercising Christian benevolence and being good Samaritans, I shall cut the concern."

"I wish you wouldn't joke about it, Harry; it's hard enough to see one's way, a precious sight harder than I thought last night. But I suppose there's a use and an abuse of both, and one'll get straight enough somehow. But you can't make out anyhow that one has a right to use old vulgus-books and copybooks."

"Hullo, more heresy! how fast a fellow goes down hill when he once gets his head before his

legs. Listen to me, Tom. Not use old vulgus-books—why, you Goth! ain't we to take the benefit of the wisdom, and admire and use the work of past generations? Not use old copy-books! Why you might as well say we ought to pull down Westminster Abbey, and put up a go-to-meeting shop with churchwarden windows; or never read Shakespeare, but only Sheridan Knowles. Think of all the work and labour that our predecessors have bestowed on these very books, and are we to make their work of no value?

"I say, Harry, please don't chaff; I'm really serious."

"And then, is it not our duty to consult the pleasure of others rather than our own, and above all that of our masters? Fancy then the difference to them in looking over a vulgus which has been carefully touched and retouched by themselves and others, and which must bring them a sort of dreamy pleasure, as if they'd met the thought or expression of it somewhere or another—before they were born perhaps; and that of cutting up, and making picture-frames round all your and my false quantities, and other monstrosities. Why, Tom, you wouldn't

be so cruel as never to let old Momus hum over the 'O genus humanum' again, and then look up doubtingly through his spectacles, and end by smiling and giving three extra marks for it; just for old sake's sake, I suppose."

"Well," said Tom getting up in something as like a huff as he was capable of, "it's deuced hard that when a fellow's really trying to do what he ought, his best friends'll do nothing but chaff him and try to put him down." And he stuck his books under his arm and his hat on his head, preparatory to rushing out into the quadrangle, to testify with his own soul of the faithlessness of friendships.

"Now don't be an ass, Tom," said East, catching hold of him, "you know me well enough by this time; my bark's worse than my bite. You, can't expect to ride your new crotchet without anybody's trying to stick a nettle under his tail and make him kick you off: especially as we shall all have to go on foot still. But now sit down and let's go over it again. I'll be as serious as a judge."

Then Tom sat himself down on the table, and waxed eloquent about all the righteousness and advantages of the new plan, as was his wont

whenever he took up any thing; going into it as if his life depended upon it, and sparing no abuse which he could think of, of the opposite method, which he denounced as ungentlemanly, cowardly, mean, lying, and no one knows what besides. "Very cool of Tom," as East thought, but didn't say, "seeing as how he only came out of Egypt himself last night at bed-time."

Well, Tom," said he at last, "you see when you and I came to school there were none of these sort of notions. You may be right—I dare say you are. Only what one has always felt about the masters is, that it's a fair trial of skill, and last between us and them—like a match at football, or a battle. We're natural enemies in school, that's the fact. We've got to learn so much Latin and Greek and do so many verses, and they've got to see that we do it. If we can slip the collar and do so much less without getting caught, that's one to us. If they can get more out of us, or catch us shirking, that's one to them. All's fair in war, but lying. If I run my luck against their's and go into school without looking at my lesson, and don't get called up, why am I a snob or a sneak? I don't tell the master I have learnt it. He's got to

find out whether I have or not: what's he paid for? If he calls me up and I get floored, he makes me write it out in Greek and English. Very good, he's caught me, and I don't grumble, I grant you, if I go and snivel to him, and tell him I've really tried to learn it but found it so hard without a translation, or say I've had a toothache or any humbug of that kind, I'm a snob. That's my school morality; it's served me, and you too, Tom, for the matter of that, these five years. And its all clear and fair no mistake about it. We understaand it, and they understand it, and I don't know what we're to come to with any other.

Tom looked at him, pleased, and a little puzzled. He had never heard East speak his mind seriously before, and couldn't help feeling how completely he had hit his own theory and practice up to that time.

"Thank you, old fellow," said he. "You're a good old brick to be serious, and not put out with me. I said more than I meant, I dare say, only you see I know I'm right: whatever you and Gower and the rest do, I shall hold on —I must. And as it's all new and an up-hill

game, you see, one must hit hard and hold on tight at first."

'Very good," said East; hold on and hit away only don't hit under the line."

"But I must bring you over, Harry, or I shan't be comfortable. Now I allow all you've said. We've always been honorable enemies with the masters. We found a state of war when we came, and went into it of course. Only don't you think things are altered a good deal? I don't feel as I used to the masters. They seem to me to treat one quite differently."

"Yes, perhaps they do," said East; there's a new set you see, mostly, who don't feel quite sure of themselves yet. They don't want to fight till they know the ground."

"I don't think it's only that," said Tom. "And then the Doctor, he does treat one so openly, and like a gentleman, and as if one was working with him."

"Well, so he does," said East; "he's a splendid fellow, and when I get into the sixth I shall act accordingly. Only you know he has nothing to do with our lessons now, except examining us. I say though," looking at his watch, "it's just the quarter. Come along."

As they walked out they got a message, to say that Arthur was just starting and would like to say good-bye; so they went down to the private entrance of the school-house, and found an open carriage, with Arthur propped up with pillows in it, looking already better, Tom thought.

They jumped up on to the steps to shake hands with him, and Tom mumbled thanks for the presents he had found in his study, and looked round anxiously for Arthur's mother.

East, who had fallen back into his usual humour, looked quaintly at Arthur and said—

"So you've been at it again, through that hot-headed convert of yours there. He's been making our lives a burthen to us all the morning about using cribs. I shall get floored to a certainty at second lesson, if I'm called up."

Arthur blushed and looked down. Tom struck in—

"Oh, it's all right. He's converted already; he always comes through the mud after us, grumbling and sputtering."

The clock struck and they had to go off to school, wishing Arthur a pleasant holiday; Tom lingering behind a moment to send his thanks and love to Arthur's mother.

Tom renewed the discussion after second lesson, and succeeded so far as to get East to promise to give the new plan a fair trial.

Encouraged by his success, in the evening, when they were sitting alone in the large study, where East lived now almost, 'vice Arthur on leave,' after examining the new fishing-rod, which both pronounced to be the genuine article, ('play enough to throw a midge tied on a single hair against the wind, and strength enough to hold a grampus,') they naturally began talking about Arthur. Tom, who was still bubbling over with last night's scene and all the thoughts of the last week, and wanting to clinch and fix the whole in his own mind, which he could never do without first going through the process of belabouring somebody else with it all, suddenly rushed into the subject of Arthur's illness, and what he had said about death.

East had given him the desired opening, after a serio-comic grumble, "that life wasn't worth having now they were tied to a young beggar who was always 'raising his standard;' and that he, East, was like a prophet's donkey, who was obliged to struggle on after the donkey-man who went after the prophet; that he had none

of the pleasure of starting the new crotchets, and didn't half understand them, but had to take the kicks, and carry the luggage as if he had all the fun," he threw his legs up on to the sofa, and put his hands behind his head, and said—

"Well, after all, he's the most wonderful little fellow I ever came across. There ain't such a meek, humble boy in the school. Hanged if I don't think now really, Tom, that he believes himself a much worse fellow than you or I, and that he don't think he has more influence in the house than Dot Bowles, who came last quarter, and ain't ten yet. But he turns you and me round his little finger, old boy—there's no mistake about that." And East nodded at Tom sagaciously,

"Now or never," thought Tom; so shutting his eyes and hardening his heart, he went straight at it, repeating all that Arthur had said, as near as he could remember it, in the very words, and all he himself had thought. The life seemed to ooze out of it as he went on, and several times he felt inclined to stop, give it all up, and change the subject. But somehow he was borne on; he had a necessity upon him to speak it all out,

and did so. At the end he looked at East with some anxiety, and was delighted to see that that young gentleman was thoughtful and attentive. The fact is, that in the stage of his inner life at which Tom had lately arrived, his intimacy with, and friendship for East, could not have lasted if he had not made him aware of, and a sharer in, the thoughts that were beginning to exercise him. Nor indeed could the friendship have lasted if East had shown no sympathy with these thoughts; so that it was a great relief to have unbosomed himself, and to have found that his friend could listen.

Tom had always had a sort of instinct that East's levity was only skin-deep, and this instinct was a true one. East had no want of reverence for anything he felt to be real; but his was one of those natures that burst into what is generally called recklessness and impiety the moment they feel that anything is being poured upon them for their good, which does not come home to their inborn sense of right, or which appeals to anything like self-interest in them. Daring and honest by nature, and out-spoken to an extent which alarmed all respectabilities, with a constant fund of animal health and spirits which

he did not feel bound to curb in any way, he had gained for himself, with the steady part of the school, (including as well those who wished to appear steady as those who really were so,) the character of a boy whom it would be dangerous to be intimate with; while his own hatred of every thing cruel, or underhand, or false, and his hearty respect for what he could see to be good and true, kept off the rest.

Tom, besides being very like East in many points of character, had largely developed in his composition the capacity for taking the weakest side. This is not putting it strongly enough, it was a necessity with him, he couldn't help it, any more than he could eating or drinking. He could never play on the strongest side with any heart at football or cricket, and was sure to make friends with any boy who was unpopular, or down on his luck.

Now, though East was not what is generally called unpopular, Tom felt more and more every day, as their characters developed, that he stood alone, and did not make friends among their contemporaries; and therefore sought him out. Tom was himself much more popular, for his power of detecting humbug was much less acute,

and his instincts were much more sociable. He was at this period of his life, too, largely given to taking people for what they gave themselves out to be; but his singleness of heart, fearlessness, and honesty, were just what East appreciated, and thus the two had been drawn into great intimacy.

This intimacy had not been interrupted by Tom's guardianship of Arthur.

East had often, as has been said, joined them in reading the Bible; but their discussions had almost always turned upon the characters of the men and women of whom they read, and not become personal to themselves. In fact, the two had shrunk from personal, religious discussions, not knowing how it might end; and fearful of risking a friendship very dear to both, and which they felt somehow, without quite knowing why, would never be the same, but either tenfold stronger or sapped at its foundation, after such a communing together.

What a bother all this explaining is! I wish we could get on without it. But we can't. However, you'll all find, if you haven't found it already, that a time comes in every human friendship, when you must go down into the depths

of yourself, and lay bare what is there to your friend, and wait in fear for his answer. A few moments may do it; and, it may be (most likely will be, as you are English boys), that you never do it but once. But done it must be, if the friendship is to be worth the name. you must find what is there, at the very root and bottom of one another's hearts; and if you are at one there, nothing on earth can, or at least ought, to sunder you.

East had remained lying down until Tom finished speaking, as if fearing to interrupt him; he now sat up at the table and leant his head on one hand, taking up a pencil with the other and working little holes with it in the table-cover. After a bit he looked up, stopped the pencil, and said, "Thank you very much, old fellow; there's no other boy in the house would have done it for me but you or Arthur. I can see well enough," he went on after a pause, "all the best big fellows look on me with suspicion; they think I'm a devil-may-care reckless young scamp —so I am—eleven hours out of twelve—but not the twelfth. Then all of our contemporaries worth knowing, follow suit of course; we're very good friends at games and all that, but not

a soul of them but you and Arthur ever tried to break throngh the crust, and see whether there was any thing at the bottom of me; and then the bad ones, I won't stand, and they know that."

"Don't you think that's half fancy, Harry?"

"Not a bit of it," said East, bitterly, pegging away with his pencil. "I see it all plain enough. Bless you, you think everybody's as straightforward and kind-hearted as you are."

"Well, but what's the reason of it? There must be a reason. You can play all the games as well as any one, and sing the best song, and are the best company in the house. You fancy you're not liked, Harry. It's all fancy."

"I only wish it was, Tom. I know I could be popular enough with all the bad ones, but that I won't have, and the good ones won't have me."

"Why not?," persisted Tom; "you don't drink or swear, or get out at night; you never bully, or cheat at lessons. If you only showed you liked it, you'd have all the best fellows in the house running after you."

"Not I," said East. Then with an effort he went on, "I'll tell you what it is. I never stop the Sacrament. I can see from the Doctor down wards, how that tells against me."

"Yes I've seen that," said Tom, "and I've been very sorry for it, and Arthur and I have talked about it. I've often thought of speaking to you, but it's so hard to begin on such subjects. I'm very glad you've opened it. Now, why don't you?"

"I've never been confirmed," said East.

"Not been confirmed!" said, Tom in astonishment. I never thought of that. Why weren't you confirmed with the rest of us nearly three years ago? I always thought you'd been confirmed at home."

"No," answered East, sorrowfully; you see this was how it happened. Last Confirmation was soon after Arthur came, and you were so taken up with him, I hardly saw either of you. Well, when the Doctor sent round for us about it, I was living mostly with Green's set—you know the sort. They all went in—I dare say it was all right, and they got good by it; I don't want to judge them. Only all I could see of their reasons drove me just the other way. 'Twas, 'because the Doctor liked it;' 'no boy got on who did'nt stay the Sacrament;' it was 'the correct thing,' in fact, like having a good hat to wear on Sundays. I couldn't stand it. I didn't

feel that I wanted to lead a different life, I was very well content as I was, and I wasn't going to sham religious to curry favour with the Doctor, or any one else."

East stopped speaking, and pegged away more diligently than ever with his pencil. Tom was ready to cry. He felt half sorry at first that he had been confirmed himself. He seemed to have deserted his earliest friend, to have left him by himself at his worst need for those long years. He got up and went and sat by East, and put his arm over his shoulder.

"Dear old boy," he said, "how careless and selfish I've been. But why didn't you come and talk to Arthur and me?"

"I wish to heaven I had," said East, "but I was a fool. It's too late talking of it now."

"Why too late? You want to be confirmed now, don't you?"

"I think so," said East. "I've thought about it a good deal; only often I fancy I must be changing, because I see it's to do me good here, just what stopped me last time. And then I go back again."

"I'll tell you now how 'twas with me," said Tom, warmly. "If it hadn't been for Arthur, I

should have done just as you did. I hope I should. I honour you for it. But then he made it out just as if it was taking the weak side before all the world—going in once for all against every thing that's strong and rich and proud and respectable, a little band of brothers against the whole world. And the Doctor seemed to say so too, only he said a great deal more."

"Ah," groaned East, "but there again, that's just another of my difficulties whenever I think about the matter. I don't want to be one of your saints, one of your elect, whatever the right phrase is. My sympathies are all the other way; with the many, the poor devils who run about the streets, and don't go to church. Don't stare, Tom; mind I'm telling you all that's in my heart—as far as I know it—but its all a muddle. You must be gentle with me if you want to land me. Now I've seen a great deal of this sort of religion, I was bred up in it, and I can't stand it. If nineteen-twentieths of the world are to be left to uncovenanted mercies, and that sort of thing, which means in plain English to go to hell, and the other twentieth are to rejoice at it all, why—"

"Oh! but, Harry, they ain't, they dont," broke in Tom, really shocked. "Oh, how I wish Arthur hadn't gone! I'm such a fool about these things. But it's all you want too, East, it is indeed. It cuts both ways somehow, being confirmed and taking the Sacrament. It makes you feel on the side of all the good and all the bad too, of everybody in the world. Only there's some great, dark, strong power, which is crushing you and everybody else. That's what Christ conquered, and we've got to fight. What a fool I am! I can't explain. If Arthur were only here!"

"I begin to get a glimmering of what you mean," said East.

"I say now," said Tom eagerly, "do you remember how we both hated Flashman?"

"Of course I do," said East; "I hate him still. What then?

"Well, when I came to take the Sacrament, I had a great struggle about that. I tried to put him out of my head; and when I couldn't do that, I tried to think of him as evil, as something that the Lord who was loving me hated, and which I might hate too. But it wouldn't do. I broke down; I believe Christ himself

broke me down; and when the Doctor gave me the bread and wine, and leant over me praying, I prayed for poor Flashman as if it had been you or Arthur."

East buried his face in his hands on the table. Tom could feel the table tremble. At last he looked up. "Thank you again, Tom," said he; "you don't know what you may have done for me to night. I think I see now how the right sort of sympathy with poor devils is got at."

"And you'll stop the Sacrament next time won't you?" said Tom.

"Can I before I'm confirmed?,'

"Go and ask the Doctor."

"I will."

That very night after prayers, East followed the Doctor and the old Verger, bearing the candle, up stairs. Tom watched, and saw the Doctor turn round when he heard footsteps following him closer than usual, and say, "Hah, East! Do you want to speak to me, my man?"

"If you please, sir;" and the private door closed, and Tom went to his study in a state of great trouble of mind.

It was almost an hour before East came back; then he rushed in breathless.

"Well, it's all right," he shouted, seizing Tom by the hand. "I feel as if a ton weight were off my mind."

"Hurrah," said Tom; "I knew it would be, but tell us all about it."

"Well, I just told him all about it. You can't think how kind and gentle he was, the great grim man, whom I've feared more than anybody on earth. When I stuck, he lifted me, just as if I'd been a little child. And he seemed to know all I'd felt, and to have gone through it all. And I burst out crying—more than I've done this five years, and he sat down by me, and stroked my head; and I went blundering on, and told him all; much worse things than I've told you. And he wasn't shocked a bit, and didn't snub me, or tell me I was a fool, and it was all nothing but pride or wickedness, though I dare say it was. And he didn't tell me not to follow out my thoughts, and he didn't give me any cut-and-dried explanation. But when I'd done he just talked a bit, I can hardly remember what he said, yet; but it seemed to spread round me like healing, and strength, and light; and to bear me up, and plant me on a rock, where I could hold my footing and fight

for myself. I don't know what to do, I feel so happy. And it's all owing to you, dear old boy!" and he siezed Tom's hand again.

"And you're to come to the Communion?" said Tom.

"Yes, and to be confirmed in the holidays."

Tom's delight was as great as his friend's. But he hadn't yet had out all his own talk, and was bent on improving the occasion: so he proceeded to propound Arthur's theory about not being sorry for his friends' deaths, which he had hitherto kept in the background, and by which he was much exercised; for he didn't feel it honest to take what pleased him and throw over the rest, and was trying vigorously to persuade himself that he should like all his best friends to die off-hand.

But East's powers of remaining serious were exhausted, and in five minutes he was saying the most ridiculous things he could think of, till Tom was almost getting angry again.

Despite of himself, however, he couldn't help laughing and giving it up, when East appealed to him "Well, Tom, you ain't going to punch my head because I insist upon being sorry when you go to earth?"

And so their talk finished for that time, and they tried to learn first lesson; with very poor success, as appeared next morning, when they were called up, and narrowly escaped being floored, which ill-luck, however, did not sit heavily on either of their souls.

CHAPTER VII.

TOM BROWN'S LAST MATCH.

"Heaven grant the manlier heart, that timely, ere
Youth fly, with life's real tempest would be coping;
The fruit of dreamy hoping
Is, waking, blank despair."

CLOUGH. *Ambarvalia.*

THE curtain now rises upon the last act of our little drama—for hard-hearted publishers warn me that a single volume must of necessity have an end. Well, well! the pleasantest things must come to an end. I little thought last long vacation, when I began these pages to help while away some spare time at a watering-place, how vividly many an old scene, which had lain hid away for years in some dusty old corner of my brain, would come back again, and stand before me as clear and bright, as if it had happened yesterday. The book has been a most grateful task to me, and I only hope that all you, my dear young friends, who read it, (friends assuredly you must be, if you get as far as this,) will be half as sorry to come to the last stage as I am.

Not but what there has been a solemn and a

sad side to it. As the old scenes became living, and the actors in them became living too, many a grave in the Crimea and distant India, as well as in the quiet churchyards of our dear old country, seemed to open and send forth their dead, and their voices and looks and ways were again in one's ears and eyes, as in the old school-days. But this was not sad; how should it be, if we believe as our Lord has taught us? How should it be, when one more turn of the wheel, and we shall be by their sides again, learning from them again, perhaps, as we did when we were new boys?

Then there were others of the old faces so dear to us once, who had somehow or another just gone clean out of sight—are they dead or living? We know not, but the thought of them brings no sadness with it. Wherever they are, we can well believe they are doing God's work and getting His wages.

But are there not some, whom we still see sometimes in the streets, whose homes and haunts we know, whom we could probably find almost any day in the week if we were set to do it, yet from whom we are really farther than we are from the dead, and from those who have

gone out of our ken? Yes, there are and must be such; and therein lies the sadness of old school memories. Yet of these our old comrades, from whom more than time and space separate us, there are some, by whose sides we can feel sure that we shall stand again when time shall be no more. We may think of one another now as dangerous fanatics or narrow bigots, with whom no truce is possible, from whom we shall only sever more and more to the end of our lives, whom it would be our respective duties to imprison or hang, if we had the power. We must go our way, and they theirs, as long as flesh and spirit hold together; but let our own Rugby poet speak words of healing for this trial:

"To veer how vain! on, onward strain,
Brave barks! in light, in darkness too;
Through winds and tides, one compass guides,
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But, O blithe breeze! and O great seas,
Though ne'er that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where'er they fare.
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last, unite them there!"*

* Clough. *Ambarvalia.*

This is not mere longing, it is a prophecy. So over these too, our old friends who are friends no more, we sorrow not as men without hope. It is only for those who seem to us to have lost compass and purpose, and to be drifting helplessly on rocks and quicksands; whose lives are spent in the service of the world, the flesh and the devil; for self alone, and not for their fellowmen, their country, or their God, that we must mourn and pray without sure hope and without light; trusting only that He, in whose hands they as well as we are, who has died for them as well as for us, who sees all His creatures

> "With larger, other eyes than ours,
> To make allowance for us all,"

will, in His own way and at His own time, lead them also home.

Another two years have passed, and it is again the end of the summer half-year at Rugby; in fact, the school has broken up. The fifth-form examinations were over last week, and upon them have followed the speeches, and the sixth-form examinations for exhibitions; and they too, are over now. The boys have gone to all the winds of heaven, except the town

boys and the eleven, and the few enthusiasts besides who have asked leave to stay in their houses to see the result of the cricket matches. For this year the Wellesburn return match and the Marylebone match are played at Rugby, to the great delight of the town and neighbourhood, and the sorrow of those aspiring young cricketers who have been reckoning for the last three months on showing off at Lords' ground.

The Doctor started for the lakes yesterday morning, after an interview with the captain of the eleven, in the presence of Thomas, at which he arranged in what school the cricket dinners were to be, and all other matters necessary for the satisfactory carrying out of the festivities; and warned them as to keeping all spirituous liquors out of the close, and having the gates closed by nine o'clock.

The Wellesburn match was played out with great success yesterday, the school winning by three wickets; and to-day the great event of the cricketing year, the Marylebone match, is being played. What a match it has been! The London eleven came down by an afternoon train yesterday, in time to see the end of the Wellesburn match; and as soon as it was over, their

leading men and umpire inspected the ground, criticizing it rather unmercifully. The captain of the school eleven, and one or two others, who had played the Lords' match before and knew old Mr. Aislebie and several of the Lords' men, accompanied them; while the rest of the eleven looked on from under the Three Trees with admiring eyes, and asked one another the names of the illustrious strangers, and recounted how many runs each of them had made in the late matches in Bell's Life. They looked such hard-bitten, wiry, whiskered fellows, that their young adversaries felt rather desponding as to the result of the morrow's match. The ground was at last chosen, and two men set to work upon it to water and roll; and then, there being yet some half-hour of daylight, some one had suggested a dance on the turf. The close was half full of citizens and their families, and the idea was hailed with enthusiasm. The cornopean player was still on the ground. In five minutes the eleven and half-a-dozen of the Wellesburn and Marylebone men got partners somehow or another, and a merry country dance was going on, to which every one flocked, and new couples joined in every minute, till there were a hundred of

them going down the middle and up again—and the long line of school-buildings looked gravely down on them, every window glowing with the last rays of the western sun, and the rooks clanged about in the tops of the old elms, greatly excited and resolved on having their country dance too, and the great flag flapped lazily in the gentle western breeze. Altogether, it was a sight which would have made glad the heart of our brave old founder, Lawrence Sheriff, if he were half as good a fellow as I take him to have been. It was a cheerful sight to see; but what made it so valuable in the sight of the captain of the school eleven was, that he there saw his young hands shaking off their shyness and awe of the Lords' men, as they crossed hands and capered about on the grass together; for the strangers entered into it all, and threw away their cigars, and danced and shouted like boys; while old Mr. Aislebie stood by looking on, in his white hat, leaning on a bat, in benevolent enjoyment. "This hop will be worth thirty runs to us to-morrow, and will be the making of Raggles and Johnson," thinks the young leader, as he revolves many things in his mind, standing by the side of Mr. Aislebie, whom he

will not leave for a minute, for he feels that the character of the school for courtesy is resting on his shoulders.

But when a quarter to nine struck, and he saw old Thomas beginning to fidget about with the keys in his hand, he thought of the Doctor's parting monition, and stopped the cornopean at once, notwithstanding the loud-voiced remonstrances from all sides; and the crowd scattered away from the close, the eleven all going into the school-house, where supper and beds were provided for them by the Doctor's orders.

Deep had been the consultations at supper as to the order of going in, who should bowl the first over, whether it would be best to play steady or freely; and the youngest hands declared that they shouldn't be a bit nervous, and praised their opponents as the jolliest fellows in the world, except, perhaps, their old friends the Wellesburn men. How far a little good-nature from their elders will go with the right sort of boys!

The morning had dawned bright and warm, to the intense relief of many an anxious youngster, up betimes to mark the signs of the weather. The eleven went down in a body before break-

fast, for a plunge in the cold bath in the corner of the close. The ground was in splendid order, and soon after ten o'clock, before spectators had arrived, all was ready, and two of the Lords' men took their places at the wicket; the school, with the usual liberality of young hands, having put their adversaries in first. Old Bailey stepped up to the wicket, and called play, and the match has begun.

"Oh, well bowled! well bowled, Johnson!" cries the captain, catching up the ball and sending it high above the rook trees, while the third Marylebone man walks away from the wicket, and old Bailey gravely sets up the middle stump again and puts the bails on.

"How many runs?" Away scamper three boys to the scoring-table, and are back again in a minute amongst the rest of the eleven, who are collected together in a knot between wicket. "Only eighteen runs, and three wickets down!"

"Huzza for old Rugby!" sings out Jack Raggles, the long-stop, toughest and burliest of boys, commonly called "Swiper Jack;" and forthwith stands on his head, and brandishes his legs in the air in triumph, till the next boy catches

hold of his heels and throws him over on to his back.

"Steady there, don't be such an ass, Jack," says the captain; "we haven't got the best wicket yet. Ah, look out now at cover-point," adds he, as he sees a long-armed, bare-headed, slashing-looking player coming to the wicket. "And, Jack, mind your hits; he steals more runs than any man in England."

And they all find that they have got their work to do now. The new comer's off-hitting is tremendous, and his running like a flash of lightning. He is never in his ground, except when his wicket is down. Nothing in the whole game so trying to boys; he has stolen three byes in the first ten minutes, and Jack Raggles is furious, and begins throwing over savagely to the further wicket, until he is sternly stopped by the captain. It is all that the young gentleman can do to keep his team steady, but he knows that every thing depends on it, and faces his work bravely. The score creeps up to fifty, the boys begin to look blank, and the spectators, who are now mustering strong, are very silent. The ball flies off his bat to all parts of the field, and he gives no rest and no catches to any one.

But cricket is full of glorious chances, and the goddess who presides over it loves to bring down the most skilful players. Johnson, the young bowler, is getting wild, and bowls a ball almost wide to the off; the batter steps out and cuts it beautifully to where cover-point is standing very deep, in fact, almost off the ground. The ball comes skimming and twisting along about three feet from the ground. He rushes at it, and it sticks somehow or other in the fingers of his left hand, to the utter astonishment of himself and the whole field. Such a catch hasn't been made in the close for years, and the cheering is maddening. "Pretty cricket," says the captain, throwing himself on the ground by the deserted wicket with a long breath; he feels that a crisis has passed.

I wish I had space to describe the whole match; how the captain stumped the next man off a leg-shooter, and bowled slow cobs to old Mr. Aislebie, who came in for the last wicket. How the Lords' men were out by half-past twelve o'clock for ninety-eight runs. How the captain of the school eleven went in first to give his men pluck, and scored twenty-five in beautiful style; how Rugby was only four behind in the

first innings. What a glorious dinner they had in the fourth-form school, and how the cover-point hitter sang the most topping comic songs, and old Mr. Aislebie made the best speeches that ever were heard, afterwards. But I haven't space, that's the fact, and so you must fancy it all, and carry yourselves on to half-past seven o'clock, when the school are again in, with five wickets down and only thirty-two runs to make to win. The Marylebone men played carelessly in their second innings, but they are working like horses now to save the match.

There is much healthy, hearty, happy life scattered up and down the close; but the group to which I beg to call your special attention is there, on the slope of the island, which looks towards the cricket-ground. It consists of three figures; two are seated on a bench, and one on the ground at their feet. The first, a tall, slight, and rather gaunt man, with a bushy eyebrow and a dry, humourous smile, is evidently a clergyman. He is carelessly dressed, and looks rather used-up, which isn't much to be wondered at, seeing that he has just finished six weeks of examination work; but there he basks, and spreads himself out in the evening sun, bent on

enjoying life, though he doesn't quite know what to do with his arms and legs. Surely it is our young friend the young Master, whom we have had glimpses of before, but his face has gained a great deal since we last came across him.

And by his side, in white flannel shirt and trousers, straw hat, the captain's belt, and the untanned yellow cricket-shoes which all the eleven wear, sits a strapping figure near six feet high, with ruddy tanned face and whiskers, curly brown hair, and a laughing, dancing eye. He is leaning forward, with his elbows resting on his knees, and dandling his favourite bat, with which he has made thirty or forty runs to-day, in his strong brown hands. It is Tom Brown, grown into a young man nineteen years old, a præpostor and captain of the eleven, spending his last day as a Rugby boy, and, let us hope, as much wiser as he is bigger since we last had the pleasure of coming across him.

And at their feet, on the warm, dry ground, similarly dressed, sits Arthur, Turkish-fashion, with his bat across his knees. He, too, is no longer a boy; less of a boy, in fact, than Tom, if one may judge from the thoughtfulness of his

face, which is somewhat paler, too, than one could wish; but his figure, though slight, is well-knit and active, and all his old timidity has disappeared, and is replaced by silent, quaint fun, with which his face twinkles all over, as he listens to the broken talk between the other two, in which he joins every now and then.

All three are watching the game eagerly, and joining in the cheering which follows every good hit. It is pleasing to see the easy, friendly footing which the pupils are on with their master, perfectly respectful, yet with no reserve and nothing forced in their intercourse. Tom has clearly abandoned the old theory of "natural enemies" in this case, at any rate.

But it is time to listen to what they are saying, and see what we can gather out of it.

"I don't object to your theory," says the master, "and I allow you have made a fair case for yourself. But now, in such books as Aristophanes, for instance, you've been reading a play this half with the Doctor, haven't you?"

"Yes, the Knights," answered Tom.

"Well, I'm sure you would have enjoyed the wonderful humour of it twice as much if you had taken more pains with your scholarship."

"Well, sir, I don't believe any boy in the form enjoyed the sets-to between Cleon and the Sausage-seller more than I did—eh, Arthur?" said Tom, giving him a stir with his foot.

"Yes, I must say he did," said Arthur. "I think, sir, you've hit upon the wrong book there."

"Not a bit of it," said the master. "Why, in those very passages of arms, how can you thoroughly appreciate them unless you are master of the weapons? and the weapons are the language which you, Brown, have never half worked at; and so, as I say, you must have lost all the delicate shades of meaning which makes the best part of the fun."

"Oh! well played—bravo, Johnson!" shouted Arthur, dropping his bat and clapping furiously, and Tom joined in with a "bravo, Johnson!" which might have been heard at the chapel.

"Eh! what was it? I didn't see," inquired the master; "they only got one run, I thought?"

"No, but such a ball, three-quarters length and coming straight for his leg-bail. Nothing but that turn of the wrist could have saved him, and he drew it away to leg for a safe one. Bravo, Johnson!"

"How well they are bowling, though," said Arthur; "they don't mean to be beat, I can see."

"There now," struck in the master, "you see that's just what I have been preaching this half-hour. The delicate play is the true thing. I don't understand cricket, so I don't enjoy those fine draws which you tell me are the best play, though when you or Raggles hit a ball hard away for six, I am as delighted as any one. Don't you see the analogy?"

"Yes, sir," answered Tom, looking up roguishly, "I see; only the question remains, whether I should have got most good by understanding Greek particles or cricket thoroughly. I'm such a thick, I never should have had time for both."

"I see you are an incorrigible," said the master, with a chuckle; "but I refute you by an example. Arthur there, has taken in Greek and cricket too."

"Yes, but no thanks to him; Greek came natural to him. Why, when he first came I remember he used to read Herodotus for pleasure as I did Don Quixote, and couldn't have made a false concord if he'd tried ever so hard —and then I looked after his cricket."

"Out! Bailey has given him out—do you see, Tom?" cries Arthur. "How foolish of them to run so hard."

"Well, it can't be helped; he has played very well. Whose turn is it to go in?"

"I don't know, they've got your list in the tent."

"Let's go and see," said Tom, rising; but at this moment Jack Raggles and two or three more come running to the island moat.

"Oh, Brown, mayn't I go in next?" shouts the Swiper.

"Whose name is next on the list?" says the captain.

"Winter's, and then Arthur's," answers the boy who carries it; "but there are only twenty-six runs to get, and no time to lose. I heard Mr. Aislebie say that the stumps must be drawn at a quarter-past eight exactly."

"Oh, do let the Swiper go in," chorus the boys; so Tom yields against his better judgment.

"I dare say now I've lost the match by this nonsense," he says, as he sits down again; "they'll be sure to get Jack's wicket in three or four minutes; however, you'll have the chance, sir,

of seeing a hard hit or two," adds he, smiling and turning to the master.

"Come, none of your irony, Brown," answers the master. "I'm beginning to understand the game scientifically. What a noble game it is, too."

"Isn't it? But it's more than a game. It's an institution," said Tom.

"Yes," said Arthur, "the birthright of British boys, old and young, as *habeas corpus* and trial by jury are of British men."

"The discipline and reliance on one another which it teaches is so valuable, I think," went on the master, "it ought to be such an unselfish game. It merges the individual in the eleven; he doesn't play that he may win, but that his side may."

"That's very true," said Tom, "and that's why football and cricket, now one comes to think of it, are such much better games than fives' or hare-and-hounds, or any others where the object is to come in first or to win for oneself, and not that one's side may win."

"And then the captain of the eleven!" said the master, "what a post is his in our school-world! almost as hard as the Doctor's; requiring

skill, and gentleness, and firmness, and I know not what other rare qualities."

"Which don't he wish he may get?" said Tom, laughing; "at any rate, he hasn't got them yet, or he wouldn't have been such a flat to-night as to let Jack Raggles go in out of his turn."

"Ah! the Doctor never would have done that," said Arthur, demurely. "Tom, you've a great deal to learn yet in the art of ruling."

"Well, I wish you'd tell the Doctor so, then, and get him to let me stop till I'm twenty. I don't want to leave, I'm sure."

"What a sight it is," broke in the master, "the Doctor as a ruler. Perhaps ours is the only little corner of the British Empire which is thoroughly, wisely, and strongly ruled just now. I'm more and more thankful every day of my life that I came here to be under him."

"So am I, I'm sure," said Tom; "and more and more sorry that I've got to leave."

"Every place and thing one sees here reminds one of some wise act of his," went on the master. "This island now—you remember the time, Brown, when it was laid out in small gardens, and cultivated by frost-bitten fags in February and March?"

"Of course I do," said Tom; "didn't I hate spending two hours in the afternoons grubbing in the tough dirt with the stump of a fives' bat? But turf-cart was good fun enough."

"I dare say it was, but it was always leading to fights with the townspeople; and then the stealing flowers out of all the gardens in Rugby for the Easter show was abominable."

"Well, so it was," said Tom, looking down; "but we fags couldn't help ourselves. But what has that to do with the Doctor's ruling?"

"A great deal, I think," said the master; "what brought island-fagging to an end?"

"Why, the Easter speeches were put off till midsummer," said Tom, "and the sixth had the gymnastic poles put up here."

"Well, and who changed the time of the speeches, and put the idea of gymnastic poles into the heads of their worships the sixth form?" said the master.

"The Doctor, I suppose," said Tom. "I never thought of that."

"Of course you didn't," said the master, "or else, fag as you were, you would have shouted with the whole school against putting down old customs. And that's the way that all the Doc-

tor's reforms have been carried out when he has been left to himself—quietly and naturally, putting a good thing in the place of a bad, and letting the bad die out; no wavering and no hurry—the best thing that could be done for the time being, and patience for the rest."

"Just Tom's own way," chimed in Arthur, nudging Tom with his elbow, "driving a nail where it will go;" to which allusion Tom answered by a sly kick.

"Exactly so," said the master, innocent of the allusion and by-play.

Meantime Jack Raggles, with his sleeves tucked up above his great brown elbows, scorning pads and gloves, has presented himself at the wicket; and having run one for a forward drive of Johnson's, is about to receive his first ball. There are only twenty-four runs to make, and four wickets to go down, a winning match if they play decently steady. The ball is a very swift one, and rises fast, catching Jack on the outside of the thigh, and bounding away as if from India-rubber, while they run two for a leg-bye amidst great applause, and shouts from Jack's many admirers. The next ball is a beautifully pitched ball for the outer stump, which

the reckless and unfeeling Jack catches hold of, and hits right round to leg for five, while the applause becomes deafening; only seventeen runs to get with four wickets—the game is all but ours!

It is over now, and Jack walks swaggering about his wicket, with the bat over his shoulder, while Mr. Aislebie holds a short parley with his men. Then the cover-point hitter, that cunning man, goes on to bowl slow twisters. Jack waves his hand triumphantly towards the tent, as much as to say, "See if I don't finish it all off now in three hits."

Alas, my son Jack! the enemy is too old for thee. The first ball of the over Jack steps out and meets, swiping with all his force. If he had only allowed for the twist! but he hasn't, and so the ball goes spinning up straight into the air, as if it would never come down again. Away runs Jack, shouting and trusting to the chapter of accidents; but the bowler runs steadily under it, judging every spin, and, calling out, "I have it," catches it, and playfully pitches it on to the back of the stalwart Jack, who is departing with a rueful countenance.

"I knew how it would be," says Tom, rising.

"Come along, the game's getting very serious."

So they leave the island and go to the tent, and after deep consultation Arthur is sent in, and goes off to the wicket with a last exhortation from Tom, to play steady and keep his bat straight. To the suggestions that Winter is the best bat left, Tom only replies, "Arthur is the steadiest, and Johnson will make the runs if the wicket is only kept up."

"I am surprised to see Arthur in the eleven," said the master, as they stood together in front of the dense crowd, which was now closing in round the ground.

"Well, I'm not quite sure that he ought to be in for his play," said Tom, "but I couldn't help putting him in. It will do him so much good, and you can't think what I owe him."

The master smiled. The clock strikes eight, and the whole field becomes fevered with excitement. Arthur, after two narrow escapes, scores one; and Johnson gets the ball. The bowling and fielding are superb, and Johnson's batting worthy the occasion. He makes here a two, and there a one, managing to keep the ball to himself, and Arthur backs up and runs perfectly; only eleven runs to make now, and the crowd scarcely

breathe. At last Arthur gets the ball again, and actually drives it forward for two, and feels prouder than when he got the three best prizes, at hearing Tom's shouts of joy, "Well played, well played, young'un!"

But the next ball is too much for a young hand, and his bails fly different ways. Nine runs to make, and two wickets to go down—it is too much for human nerves.

Before Winter can get in, the omnibus which is to take the Lords' men to the train pulls up at the side of the close, and Mr. Aislebie and Tom consult, and give out that the stumps will be drawn after the next over. And so ends the great match. Winter and Johnson carry out their bats, and, it being a one day's match, the Lords' men are declared winners, they having scored the most in the first innings.

But such a defeat is a victory: so think Tom and all the school eleven, as they accompany their conquerors to the omnibus, and send them off with three ringing cheers, after Mr. Aislebie has shaken hands all round, saying to Tom, "I must compliment you, sir, on your eleven, and I hope we shall have you for a member if you come up to town."

As Tom and the rest of the eleven were turning back into the close, and everybody was beginning to cry out for another country dance, encouraged by the success of the night before, the young master who was just leaving the close, stopped him, and asked him to come up to tea at half-past eight, adding, "I won't keep you more than half-an-hour, and ask Arthur to come up too."

"I'll come up with you directly if you'll let me," said Tom, "for I feel rather melancholy, and not quite up to the country dance and supper with the rest."

"Do, by all means," said the master, I'll wait here for you."

So Tom went off to get his boots and things from the tent, to tell Arthur of the invitation, and to speak to his second in command about stopping the dancing and shutting up the close as soon as it grew dusk. Arthur promised to follow as soon as he had had a dance. So Tom handed his things over to the man in charge of the tent, and walked quietly away to the gate where the master was waiting, and the two took their way together up the Hilmorton road.

Of course they found the master's house locked

up, and all the servants away in the close, about this time no doubt footing it away on the grass with extreme delight to themselves, and in utter oblivion of the unfortunate bachelor their master, whose one enjoyment in the shape of meals was his "dish of tea" (as our grandmothers called it), in the evening; and the phrase was apt in his case, for he always poured his out into the saucer before drinking. Great was the good man's horror at finding himself shut out of his own house. Had he been alone he would have treated it as a matter of course, and would have strolled contentedly up and down his gravel-walk until some one came home; but he was hurt at the stain on his character of host, especially as the guest was a pupil. However, the guest seemed to think it a great joke, and presently as they poked about round the house, mounted a wall from which he could reach a passage window: the window, as it turned out, was not bolted, so in another minute Tom was in the house and down at the front door, which he opened from inside. The master chuckled grimly at this burglarious entry, and insisted on leaving the hall door and two of the front windows open, to frighten the truants on their

return; and then the two set about foraging for tea, in which operation the master was much at fault, having the faintest possible idea of where to find anything, and being moreover wonderously short-sighted; but Tom by a sort of instinct knew the right cupboards in the kitchen and pantry, and soon managed to place on the snuggery table better materials for a meal than had appeared there probably during the reign of his tutor, who was then and there initiated, amongst other things, into the excellence of that mysterious condiment, a dripping cake. The cake was newly baked, and all rich and flaky; Tom had found it reposing in the cook's private cupboard, awaiting her return; and as a warn ing to her they finished it to the last crumb. The kettle sang away merrily on the hob of the snuggery, for, notwithstanding the time of year, they lighted a fire, throwing both the windows wide open at the same time; the heap of books and papers were pushed away to the other end of the table, and the great solitary engraving of King's College Chapel over the mantel-piece looked less stiff than usual, as they settled themselves down in the twilight to the serious drinking of tea.

After some talk on the match, and other in-

different subjects, the conversation came naturally back to Tom's approaching departure, over which he began again to make his moan.

"Well, we shall all miss you quite as much as you will miss us," said the master. "You are the Nestor of the school now, are you not?

"Yes, ever since East left," answered Tom.

"By-the-bye have you heard from him?"

"Yes I had a letter in February, just before he started for India to join his regiment."

"He will make a capital officer."

"Aye, won't he?" said Tom, brightening;" "no fellow could handle boys better, and I suppose soldiers are very like boys. And he'll never tell them to go where he won't go himself. No mistake about that—a braver fellow never walked."

"His year in the sixth will have taught him a good deal that will be useful to him now."

"So it will," said Tom staring into the fire. "Poor dear Harry," he went on, "how well I remember the day we were put out of the twenty. How he rose to the situation, and burnt his cigar-cases, and gave away his pistols, and pondered on the constitutional authority of the sixth, and his new duties to the Doctor, and the

fifth-form, and the fags. Aye, and no fellow ever acted up to them better, though he was always a people's man—for the fags, and against constituted authorities. He couldn't help that, you know. I'm sure the Doctor must have liked him?" said Tom, looking up inquiringly.

"The Doctor sees the good in every one, and appreciates it," said the master dogmatically, "but I hope East will get a good colonel. He won't do if he can't respect those above him. How long it took him, even here, to learn the lesson of obeying."

"Well, I wish I was alongside of him," said Tom. "If I can't be at Rugby, I want to be at work in the world, and not dawdling away three years at Oxford."

"What do you mean by "at work in the world?" said the master, pausing, with his lips close to his saucer-full of tea, and peering at Tom over it.

"Well, I mean real work; one's profession; whatever one will have really to do, and make one's living by it. I want to be doing some real good, feeling that I am not only at play in the world," answered Tom, rather puzzled to find out himself what he really did mean.

"You are mixing up two very different things in your head, I think, Brown," said the master, putting down his empty saucer, "and you ought to get clear about them. You talk of 'working to get your living,' and 'doing some real good in the world,' in the same breath. Now you may be getting a very good living in a profession, and yet doing no good at all in the world, but quite the contrary, at the same time. Keep the latter before you as your one object, and you will be right, whether you make a living or not; but if you dwell on the other, you'll very likely drop into mere money-making, and let the world take care of itself for good or evil. Don't be in a hurry about finding your work in the world for yourself; you are not old enough to judge for yourself yet, but just look about you in the place you find yourself in, and try to make things a little better and honester there. You'll find plenty to keep your hand in at Oxford, or wherever else you go. And don't be led away to think this part of the world important, and that unimportant. Every corner of the world is important. No man knows whether this part or that is most so, but every man may do some honest work in his own corner." And then the

good man went on to talk wisely to Tom of the sort of work which he might take up as an undergraduate; and warned him of the prevalent University sins, and explained to him the many and great differences between University and school life; till the twilight changed into darkness, and they heard the truant servants stealing in by the back entrance.

"I wonder where Arthur can be," said Tom at last, looking at his watch; "why, its nearly half-past nine already."

"Oh, he is comfortably at supper with the eleven, forgetful of his oldest friends," said the master. "Nothing has given me greater pleasure," he went on, "than your friendship for him, it has been the making of you both."

"Of me, at any rate," answered Tom; "I should never have been here now but for him. It was the luckiest chance in the world that sent him to Rugby, and made him my chum."

"Why do you talk of the lucky chances? said the master: "I don't know that there are any such things in the world; at any rate there was neither luck nor chance in that matter."

Tom looked at him inquiringly, and he went on, "Do you remember when the Doctor lectured

you and East at the end of one half-year, when you were in the shell, and had been getting into all sorts of scrapes?"

"Yes, well enough," said Tom, "it was the half-year before Arthur came."

"Exactly so" answered the master. "Now I was with him a few minutes afterwards, and he was in great distress about you two. And, after some talk, we both agreed that you in particular wanted some object in the school beyond games and mischief, for it was quite clear that you never would make the regular school work your first object. And so the Doctor at the beginning of the next half-year, looked out the best of the new boys and separated you and East, and put the youug boy into your study, in the hope that when you had somebody to lean on you, you would begin to see to stand a little steadier yourself, and get manliness and thoughtfulness. And I can assure you he has watched the experiment ever since with great satisfaction. Ah! not one of you boys will ever know the anxiety you have given him, or the care with which he has watched over every step in your school lives."

Up to this time Tom had never wholly given in to, or understood the Doctor. At first he had

thoroughly feared him. For some years, as I have tried to show, he had learnt to regard him with love and respect, and to think him a very great and wise and good man. But, as regarded his own position in the school, of which he was no little proud, Tom had no idea of giving any one credit for it but himself; and truth to tell, was a very self-conceited young gentleman on the subject. He was wont to boast that he had fought his own way fairly up the school, and had never made up to, or been taken up by any big fellow or master, and that it was now quite a different place from what it was when he first came. And indeed, though he didn't actually boast of it, yet in his secret soul he did to a great extent believe, that the great reform in the school had been owing quite as much to himself as to any one else. Arthur, he acknowledged, had done him good, and taught him a good deal, so had other boys in different ways; but they had not had the same means of influence on the school in general; and as for the Doctor, why he was a splendid master, bnt every one knew that masters could do very little out of school hours. In short, he felt on terms of equality with his chief, so far as the social state of the

school was concerned, and thought that the Doctor would find it no easy matter to get on without him. Moreover, his school toryism was still strong, and he looked still with some jealousy on the Doctor, as somewhat of a fanatic in the matter of change; and thought it very desirable for the school that he should have some wise person (such as himself) to look sharply after vested school-rights, and see that nothing was done to the injury of the republic without due protest.

It was a new light to him to find, that besides teaching the sixth, and governing and guiding the whole school, editing classics, and writing histories, the great head-master had found time in those busy years to watch over the career, even of him, Tom Brown, and his particular friends,—and, no doubt, of fifty other boys at the same time; and all this without taking the least credit to himself, or seeming to know, or let any one else know, that he ever thought particularly of any boy at all.

However, the Doctor's victory was complete from that moment over Tom Brown at any rate. He gave way at all points, and the enemy marched right over him, calvary, infantry, and

artillery, the land transport corps, and the camp followers. It had taken eight long years to do it, but now it was done thoroughly, and there wasn't a corner of him left which didn't believe in the Doctor. Had he returned to school again, and the Doctor began the half-year by abolishing fagging, and football, and the Saturday half-holiday, or all or any of the most cherished school institutions, Tom would have supported him with the blindest faith. And so, after a half confession of his previous short-comings, and sorrowful adieus to his tutor, from whom he received two beautifully-bound volumes of the Doctor's Sermons, as a parting present, he marched down to the school-house, a hero-worshipper, who would have satisfied the soul of Thomas Carlyle himself.

There he found the eleven at high jinks after supper, Jack Raggles shouting comic songs, and performing feats of strength; and was greeted by a chorus of mingled remonstrance at his desertion, and joy at his reappearance. And falling in with the humour of the evening, was soon as great a boy as all the rest; and at ten o'clock was chaired round the quadrangle, on one of the hall benches, borne aloft by the eleven,

shouting in chorus, "For he's a jolly good fellow," while old Thomas in a melting mood, and the other school-house servants, stood looking on.

And the next morning after breakfast he squared up all the cricketing accounts, went round to his tradesmen and other acquaintance, and said his hearty good-byes; and by twelve o'clock was in the train, and away for London, no longer a school-boy, and divided in his thoughts between hero-worship, honest regrets over the long stage of his life which was now slipping out of sight behind him, and hopes and resolves for the next stage, upon which he was entering with all the confidence of a young traveller.

CHAPTER VIII.

FINIS.

"Strange friend, past, present, and to be;
Loved deeplier, darklier understood;
Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee."

TENNYSON.

IN the summer of 1842, our hero stopped once again at the well-known station; and, leaving his bag and fishing-rod with a porter, walked slowly and sadly up towards the town. It was now July. He had rushed away from Oxford the moment that term was over, for a fishing ramble in Scotland, with two college friends, and had been for three weeks living on oatcake, mutton-hams, and whiskey, in the wildest parts of Skye. They had descended one sultry evening on the little inn at Kyle Rhea ferry, and while Tom and another of the party put their tackle together and began exploring the stream for a sea-trout for supper, the third strolled into the house to arrange for their entertainment. Presently he came out in a loose blouse and slippers, a short pipe in his mouth, and an old newspaper in his hand, and threw

himself on the heathery scrub, which met the shingle within easy hail of the fishermen. There he lay, the picture of free-and-easy loafing, hand-to-mouth young England, "improving his mind," as he shouted to them, by the perusal of the fortnight-old weekly paper, soiled with the marks of toddy-glasses and tobacco-ashes, the legacy of the last traveller, which he had hunted out from the kitchen of the little hostelry, and, being a youth of a communicative turn of mind, began imparting the contents to the fisherman as he went on.

"What a bother they are making about these wretched corn laws; here's three or four columns full of nothing but sliding scales and fixed duties. Hang this tobacco, it's always going out! Ah, here's something better—a splendid match between Kent and England, Brown Kent winning by three wickets. Felix fifty-six runs without a chance, and not out!"

Tom, intent on a fish which had risen at him twice, answered only with a grunt.

"Any thing about the Goodwood?" called out the third man.

"Rory-o-more drawn. Butterfly colt amiss," shouted the student.

"Just my luck," grumbled the inquirer, jerking his flies off the water, and throwing again with a heavy, sullen splash, and frightening Tom's fish.

"I say, can't you throw lighter over there? We ain't fishing for grampuses," shouted Tom across the stream.

"Hullo, Brown! here's something for you," called out the reading man next moment. "Why, your old master, Arnold of Rugby, is dead."

Tom's hand stopped half-way in his cast, and his line and flies went all tangling round and round his rod; you might have knocked him over with a feather. Neither of his companions took any notice of him luckily; and, with a violent effort, he set to work mechanically to disentangle his line. He felt completely carried off his moral and intellectual legs, as if he had lost his standing-point in the invisible world. Besides which, the deep-loving loyalty which he felt for his old leader made the shock intensely painful. It was the first great wrench of his life, the first gap which the angel Death had made in his circle, and he felt numbed, and beaten-down, and spiritless. Well, well! I believe it was good for him and for many others

in like case; who had to learn by that loss, that the soul of man cannot stand or lean upon any human prop, however strong, and wise, and good; but that He upon whom alone it can stand and lean will knock away all such props in His own wise and merciful way, until there is no ground or stay left but Himself, the Rock of Ages, upon whom alone a sure foundation for every soul of man is laid.

As he wearily laboured at his line, the thought struck him, "It may all be false, a mere newspaper lie," and he strode up to the recumbent smoker.

"Let me look at the paper," said he.

"Nothing else in it," answered the other, handing it up to him listlessly.—Hullo Brown! what's the matter, old fellow—ain't you well?"

"Where is it?" said Tom, turning over the leaves, his hands trembling, and his eyes swimming, so that he could not read.

"What? What are you looking for?" said his friend, jumping up and looking over his shoulder.

"That—about Arnold," said Tom.

"Oh here," said the other, putting his finger on the paragraph. Tom read it over and over again; there could be no mistake of identity, though the account was short enough.

"Thank you," said he at last, dropping the paper, "I shall go for a walk: don't you and Herbert wait supper for me." And away he strode, up over the moor at the back of the house, to be alone, and master his grief if possible.

His friend looked after him, sympathizing and wondering, and knocking the ashes out of his pipe, walked over to Herbert. After a short parley they walked together up to the house.

"I'm afraid that confounded newspaper has spoiled Brown's fun for this trip."

"How odd that he should be so fond of his old master," said Herbert. Yet they also were both public-school men.

The two, however, notwithstanding Tom's prohibition, waited supper for him, and had everything ready when he came back some half-an-hour afterwards. But he could not join in their cheerful talk, and the party was soon silent, notwithstanding the efforts of all three. One thing only had Tom resolved, and that was that he couldn't stay in Scotland any longer; he felt an irresistible longing to get to Rugby, and then home, and soon broke it to the others, who had too much tact to oppose.

So by daylight the next morning he was marching thro gh Rosshire, and in the evening hit the Caledonian canal, took the next steamer, and travelled as fast as boat and railway could carry him to the Rugby station.

As he walked up to the town he felt shy and afraid of being seen, and took the back streets; why, he didn't know, but he followed his instinct. At the school-gates he made a dead pause; there was not a soul in the quadrangle—all was lonely, and silent, and sad. So with another effort he strode through the quadrangle, and into the school-house offices.

He found the little matron in her room, in deep mourning; shook her hand, tried to talk, and moved nervously about: she was evidently thinking of the same subject as he, but he couldn't begin talking.

"Where shall I find Thomas?" said he at last, getting desperate.

"In the servants' hall, I think, sir. But won't you take any thing?" said the matron, looking rather disappointed.

"No, thank you," said he, and strode off again to find the old verger, who was sitting in his little den as of old, puzzling over hieroglyphics.

He looked up through his spectacles, as Tom seized his hand and wrung it.

"Ah! you've heard all about it, sir, I see," said he.

Tom nodded, and then sat down on the shoe-board, while the old man told his tale, and wiped his spectacles, and fairly flowed over with quaint, homely, honest sorrow.

By the time he had done, Tom felt much better.

"Where is he buried, Thomas?" said he at last.

"Under the altar in the chapel, sir," answered Thomas. "You'd like to have the key, I dare say."

"Thank you, Thomas,—yes, I should, very much." And the old man fumbled among his bunch, and then got up, as though he would go with him; but after a few steps stopped short and said, "Perhaps you'd like to go by yourself, sir?"

Tom nodded, and the bunch of keys were handed to him with an injunction to be sure and lock the door after him, and bring them back before eight o'clock.

He walked quickly through the quadrangle

and out into the close. The longing which had been upon him and driven him thus far, like the gad-fly in the Greek legends, giving him no rest in mind or body, seemed all of a sudden not to be satisfied, but to shrivel up, and pall. "Why should I go on? It's no use," he thought, and threw himself at full length on the turf, and looked vaguely and listlessly at all the well-known objects. There were a few of the town boys playing cricket, their wicket pitched on the best piece in the middle of the big-side ground, a sin about equal to sacrilege in the eyes of a captain of the eleven. He was very nearly getting up to go and send them off. "Pshaw! they won't remember me. They've more right there than I," he muttered. And the thought that his sceptre had departed, and his mark was wearing out, came home to him for the first time, and bitterly enough. He was lying on the very spot where the fights came off; where he himself had fought six years ago his first and last battle.—He conjured up the scene till he could almost hear the shouts of the ring, and East's whisper in his ear; and looking across the close to the Doctor's private door, half expected to see it open, and the tall figure in cap and gown

come striding under the elm-trees towards him.

No, no! that sight could never be seen again. There was no flag flying on the round tower; the school-house windows were all shuttered up; and when the flag went up again, and the shutters came down, it would be to welcome a stranger. All that was left on earth of him whom he had honoured, was lying cold and still under the chapel floor. He would go in and see the place once more, and then leave it once for all. New men and new methods might do for other people; let those who would worship the rising star, he at least would be faithful to the sun which had set. And so he got up, and walked to the chapel door and unlocked it, fancying himself the only mourner in all the broad land, and feeding on his own selfish sorrow.

He passed through the vestibule, and then paused for a moment to glance over the empty benches. His heart was still proud and high, and he walked up to the seat which he had last occupied as a sixth-form boy, and sat himself down there to collect his thoughts.

And, truth to tell, they needed collecting and settling in order not a little. The memories of eight years were all dancing through his brain,

and carrying him about whither they would; while beneath them all, his heart was throbbing with the dull sense of a loss that could never be made up to him. The rays of the evening sun came solemnly through the painted windows above his head and fell in gorgeous colours on the opposite wall, and the perfect stillness soothed his spirit by little and little. And he turned to the pulpit, and looked at it, and then leaning forward, with his head on his hands, groaned aloud.—'If he could only have seen the Doctor again for one five minutes, to have told him all that was in his heart, what he owed to him, how he loved and reverenced him, and would, by God's help, follow his steps in life and death, he could have borne it all without a murmur. But that he should have gone away for ever without knowing it all, was too much to bear.'——"But am I sure that he does not know it all?"—the thought made him start—"May he not even now be near me, in this very chapel? If he be, am I sorrowing as he would have me sorrow—as I shall wish to have sorrowed when I shall meet him again?"

He raised himself up and looked round; and after a minute rose and walked humbly down

to the lowest bench, and sat down on the very seat which he had occupied on his first Sunday at Rugby. And then the old memories rushed back again, but softened and subdued, and soothing him as he let himself be carried away by them. And he looked up at the great painted window above the altar, and remembered how, when a little boy, he used to try not to look through it at the elm-trees and the rooks, before the painted glass came—and the subscription for the painted glass, and the letter he wrote home for money to give to it. And there, down below, was the very name of the boy who sat on his right hand on that first day, scratched rudely in the oak pannelling.

And then came the thought of all his old school-fellows; and form after form of boys, nobler, and braver, and purer than he, rose up and seemed to rebuke him. Could he not think of them, and what they had felt and were feeling; they who had honoured and loved from the first, the man whom he had taken years to know and love? Could he not think of those yet dearer to him who was gone, who bore his name and shared his blood, and were now without a husband or a father? Then the grief which he began to

share with others became gentle and holy, and he rose up once more, and walked up the steps to the altar; and while the tears flowed freely down his cheeks, knelt down humbly and hopefully, to lay down there his share of a burden which had proved itself too heavy for him to bear in his own strength.

Here let us leave him—where better could we leave him, than at the altar, before which he had first caught a glimpse of the glory of his birthright, and felt the drawing of the bond which links all living souls together in one brotherhood —at the grave beneath the altar of him who had opened his eyes to see that glory, and softened his heart till it could feel that bond.

And let us not be hard on him, if at that moment his soul is fuller of the tomb and him who lies there, than of the altar and Him of whom it speaks. Such stages have to be gone through, I believe, by all young and brave souls, who must win their way through hero-worship, to the worship of Him who is the King and Lord of heroes. For it is only through our mysterious human relationships, through the love and tenderness and purity of mothers, and sisters, and wives,—through the strength and courage and

wisdom of fathers, and brothers, and teachers, that we can come to the knowledge of Him, in whom alone the love, and the tenderness, and the purity, and the strength, and the courage, and the wisdom of all these dwell forever and ever in perfect fulness.

THE END.